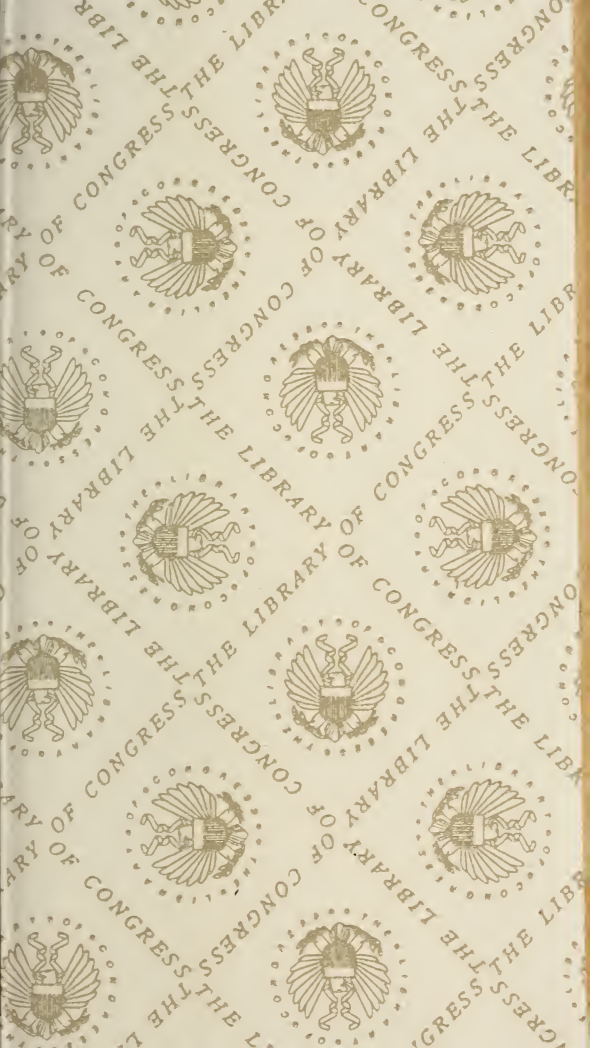


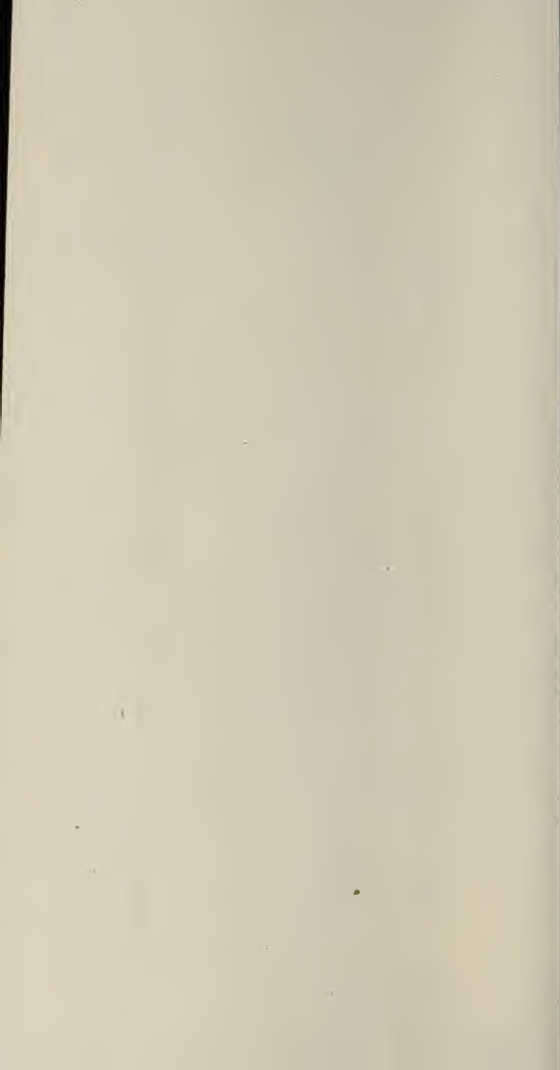
PR 5169

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1816











THE
EMERALD ISLE:

A POEM.



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EMERALD ISLE:

A POEM.

BY CHARLES PHILLIPS, ESQ.

BARRISTER AT LAW.

" Finibus occiduis describitur optima tellus,
Nomine et antiquis Scotia scripta libris,
Insula, dives opum, gemmarum, vestis et auri,
Commoda corporibus, aere, sole, solo,—
Melle fluit pulchris et lacteis Scotia campis,
Vestibus atque armis, frugibus, arte, viris,
Ursorum rabies nulla est ibi—sæva leonum
Semina, nec unquam Scotica terra tulit.
Nulla venena nocent, nec serpens serpit in herba,
Nec conquesta canit garrula rana lacu!
In qua Scotorum gentes habitare merentur,
Incluta gens hominum, milite, pace, fide."

DONATUS.

PHILADELPHIA:

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Mr. M. Ryngstedt
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Recd. H.M. 28 July 27.

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCE REGENT,
IRELAND'S HOPE, AND ENGLAND'S
ORNAMENT,
THE FOLLOWING POEM
IS,
WITH HIS AUTHORITY,
GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED.

Sligo, Ireland, 22d April, 1812.



PREFACE.

A BRIEF outline of the following poem was some time since presented to the public, under the title of "The Consolations of Erin." The reception of my rude and unfinished sketch so far surpassed my most sanguine expectations, that, were it only out of gratitude, I could do no less than endeavour to repay, as far as labour could repay, the loan with which I had been so prematurely honoured. Conscious, however, of many errors, and naturally fearful of more, the only apology which I can offer is the purity of my motive.

When I first embarked for England, in the pursuit of my professional studies, my most poignant emotions were, as might be expected, love for my native land, and regret at leaving it; but, the necessity of a separation, and the prospect of return, gradually subdued the force of feeling, and the first sight of England effaced, for the moment, every rival impression. With mute and wondering contemplation, I saw her rise before me in the solitude of the ocean—the hermitage of the good, the wise, and the free—the temple where Milton worshipped, Shakspeare sung, and Chatham slept—where Piety fled for her last earthly refuge, and Freedom hailed her insulted sanctuary!

Little was it to be wondered at that a youthful mind, thus contemplating her abstract splendour,

should have expected, perhaps extravagantly, an individual conformity. But, alas! what was my astonishment to find, among those "lords of human kind," a prejudice against my native land, predominant above every other feeling—inveterate as ignorance could generate, and monstrous as credulity could feed! Was there an absurdity uttered—it was *Irish!* was there a crime committed—it was *Irish!* was there a freak at which folly would blush—a frolic which levity would disown—a cruelty at which barbarism would shudder—none could hatch or harbour them but an Irishman! Ireland was the ribald's jest and the miser's profit—the painter sold her in caricature, the ballad-singer chanted her in burlesque, and the pliant senator eked out his stupid hour with the plagiarism of her slander! In the very seat of legislation it was deliberately asserted that Ireland was "a burthen" on the empire! The judicious apothegm remains upon record, a solitary memorial of its author's eloquence, and most characteristic specimen of his political sagacity. To those who could either utter or patiently hear such an absurdity I adduce no argument—their ignorance is too prejudiced to be taught, and their prejudice too contemptible to be combated: but, to the liberal and the thinking is offered, in the following pages, an imperfect summary of Ireland's benefactions, not only to England, but to the world—benefactions of deep interest to the nation which received, and of permanent glory to the nation which bestowed them.

Elated as my spirit must naturally be at the recital of my country's merits, it is, nevertheless, bowed down with the consciousness of personal misrepresentation. Such is the unhappy state of Ireland, that party brands the name of patriotism, and a love for the land is deemed an enmity to the government! Our very virtues are sicklied with the hue of suspicion—our liberality is rebellion—our candour craft—our piety polemics! Whether it be by foreign gold or by native misfortune, there is generated within our soil a monster more watchful and more venomous than the vipers which shun us. Awed by no virtue, subdued by no kindness, and crushed by no correction, it strengthens with our weakness, and feeds on our famine;—like the poison tree of Java,* spreading its verdant branches to the sky, while it blasts and withers the soil which gave it birth! The monster is **DISUNION**. While that hydra lives Ireland cannot prosper; but let us once banish it the land, and we shall then see who dare refuse us a just right or offer an unexpiated insult.

For myself, *I here most solemnly abjure all party spirit whatsoever*.—I merge the partisan in the Irishman—the sectarian in the Christian—the Romanist in the man. I look upon my country as a parent, and on her natives as brethren; and, with that filial and fraternal spirit, I offer them the effusions of an heart which throbs but for their welfare.

* See "Sketches, civil and military, of the island of Java.—Second edition."



THE
EMERALD ISLE:

A POEM.

ERIN, dear by every tie
Which binds us to our infancy;
By weeping Memory's fondest claims,
By Nature's holiest, highest names,
By the sweet potent spell that twines
The exile's secret heart around,
By wo and distance faster bound,
When for his native soil he pines,
As, wafted o'er the clouded deep,
And shuddering at the tempest's roar,
He thinks how sweet its waters sleep
Upon thy lone and lovely shore:

By the indignant patriot's tear,
Oh! even by misfortune dear.

ERIN, from thy living tomb
Arise—the hour of hope is come.
Think on what thou once hast been;
Think on many a glorious scene
Which graced thy hills and vallies green;
Think on Malachi the brave;
Look on Brian's verdant grave— */ note*
Brian—the glory and grace of his age;
 Brian—the shield of the emerald isle;
The lion incensed was a lamb to his rage;
 The dove was an eagle compared to his smile!
Tribute on enemies, hater of war,
 Wide-flaming sword of the warrior throng,
Liberty's beacon, religion's bright star,
 Soul of the seneacha, "light of the song." *2*

The sun has grown old since Clontarf's bloody
 wave
Saw thee sleep the sweet sleep of the patriot brave;
But thy glory still infantine beams from on high,
The light of our soil and the sun of our sky;
And, centuries hence, Time shall see that sweet
 light,
Unheeding his envy, still youthful and bright!

Oh! had I the power, holy scourge of the Dane,
To waken the glories that circled thy reign,
The captive would triumph, the tyrant should
die;

Yet, alas! to the angels above 'tis but given,
While chanting the vesper of heroes at even,
To pause at thy name 'mid the music of heaven,
And shed the mute tear on thy memory!
Oh! there were days in the ISLAND of SAINTS,
No bard could dare to sing,
Holy deeds, which the pen that paints
Must come from an angel's wing!

It is not now for an impious time
The hallowed tale to tell,
Of sacred lore and song sublime,
And learning, spread through many a clime,
By the tongue of Columbkille! *B*

It is not now for a downward age,
Or the feeble hand that writes,
To dim, with his degenerate page,
The wisdom meek and martial rage
Of Conn of the hundred fights! *4 note*
It is not now for the spiritless song,
Or the tame and tuneless lyre,
To tell of the wondering crowds that hung
On the hero hand and poet tongue
Of Cormac—heart of fire! *5*

The days are gone and the bards are dead
That well could tell the tale,
Like the flower of the valley they flourished, and
fled
Like the song of the mountain gale.

Where now the passing stranger sees
Some orphan tree
Sighing in the desert breeze,
So piteously—
There once the holy druid prayed,
Amid his stately grove,
Or sweetly breathed the myrtle shade,
As courtly knight and lady strayed,
In ecstasy of love.

It is not for the earthly soul
These hallowed sights to see,
But, bursting from its sable shrouds,
Like lightning from the midnight clouds,
The buried age will rise and roll
Before the child of poesy.

Arise, arise, thou vision bright!
Arise and glorify my sight!
Pour down thy radiance from on high;
Glance but upon mine youthful eye,
One glimpse of Erin's faded majesty!


Rise, visions of our golden age!
And flash your glories on my page!
Rise, ancient heroes of our isle!
And cheer your country with a smile!
Rise, shades of the departed years!
Rise, sages, bards, and holy seers!
Usher, Swift, and Farquhar come
From your star-encircled home!—
See, see the vision passing by,
See how it glows along the sky,
A grand eternal galaxy!
Poor Erin, though surrounding night
May make that galaxy more bright,
Still hast thou hope some happy star
Will lead in Morning's lucid car;
For, even in this moment drear,
Such splendid prodigies appear,
That one must think their heavenly ray
The promise of returning day.—
See thy laurel-circled son
Leading crimson Conquest on—
See how India comes from far,
And looks on Lusitania's war—
See how she waves her banner proud,
And claps her hands and cries aloud,
“Yield, Europe, half his fame to me!
“I nursed the child of Victory.”—

Happy chief! upon whose head
Contending climes their honours shed!
Happy chief! whose sword has won
A title nobler than a throne,
THE NATION-SAVING WELLINGTON!

And does not he—oh! write the name
In characters of living flame—
Does not Sheridan refuse
The gift of every stranger muse;
Bringing, with filial love, to thee,
The glories of his poverty?
Still showing others wisdom's way,
Still led himself, by wit, astray;
Of contradictions, so combined,
With views so brilliant, yet so blind,
That in him error looks like truth,
Folly is reason, age is youth.

Immortal man! designed to be
The country's own epitome;
When thy keen flashes set no more
The midnight table in a roar,
Sages and wits alike shall come
To heap the garlands on thy tomb,
And every weeping muse, in turn,
Clasp in her arms her favourite's urn!

E'en from that urn shall rise relief,
Glory will so illumine grief:
Thus when the radiant orb of day
Sheds on the world its parting ray,
The lustre all creation cheers,
And orphan Nature smiles in tears.
Nor, Grattan, may'st thou stand aside
When Erin counts her cause of pride!
Thou, thou who in her darkest night,
Rose, like a meteor, on her sight,
When a native traitor's blow
Laid thy lovely Erin low.
Oh! round that last ill-omined field,
Where her high heart was forced to yield,
When in its wrath the midnight cloud
Rolled its thunder-laden shroud,
Burning through storm and cloud, thy beam
Shot on her eye a loftier gleam:
Cheered her sunk heart, and bid her feel
That virtue might be conqueror still.
E'en, when the remnant of the fight,
Her warriors, scorning chains or flight,
Though dim their spear and cleft their shield,
Hung on the limits of the field;
They watched upon the cloud afar
The radiance of thy guiding star;
Radiance so grand, so pure, 'twas given
To brighten earth, and show them heaven—

That heaven, Kirwan, which sent thee
On earth to show its purity;
But which, enamoured of thy tongue,
Refused the blessing to us long;
And Virtue now holds out to men
The hope of hearing thee again.
Apostle worthy of thy God!
Like him, a thorny path you trod,
Shedding thine high and holy grace
Upon a worthless, thankless race!
Blush, mitred Dulness, blush with shame,
At Kirwan's great neglected name. 
But who is here with olive crowned,
With Echo listening for a sound,
And all the passions bending round?
Ecstatic Mirth and stern Despair
Owning alike their master there!
Whose is the wonder-working wand
That conjures up the shadowy band—
Bids sorrow, shame, and rapture start
From the recesses of the heart;
Calls the quick tear to Joy's blue eye,
Alternate wakes the smile and sigh;
And reigns, with soft and proud control,
Unrivalled sovereign of the soul?
Curran, now I know thee well;
I know thee by thy potent spell:

But hence without applause from me;
I may not worship witchery.—
Yet sure if aught of magic art,
With secret sway, enslaves the heart,
'Tis when lovely woman's smile
Resistless wings the fatal wile:
Yet vain the hope, the effort vain
To 'scape the soft and silken chain;
Nor can the captive muse repine
A willing slave at Edgeworth's shrine.
Edgeworth! a parent's and a nation's pride!
Virtue's chaste guardian, Erin's virgin guide!
Star of thy sex! round whom, on airy wing,
Each grace meanders, and the muses sing,
Wisdom expands, Wit's varied vision plays,
Genius careers, while eagle Fancy strays,
Prometheus like, in envy 'mid the blaze!
Yes, if this earth can yield a ray divine,
And heaven's pure sun with human shade combine,
'Tis when, enshrined within a female form,
Genius and virtue bear the blended charm;
They soften life, ameliorate their sphere,
In joy adorn, and in misfortune cheer,
Beam round their orb anticipated bliss,
And half unfold a future state in this.
Happy the bard such union to reveal,
But happier thou, fair Owenson, to feel! *my*

Hail, Justice! maid austere but mild,
Hail to thy pure and patriot child!
Oh! vain would be the poet's lay,
And faint and feeble memory's ray,
And cold thy country's heart must be,
When she forgets her Ponsonby!
While modest worth and manly mind,
With honour's spotless soul combined,
While wisdom meek and honest zeal,
The hand to act, the heart to feel,
Claim, from this land, a tribute free,
She'll not forget her Ponsonby.

But see who comes with careless measure,
Looking bliss and breathing pleasure,
Led along by Beauty's choir,
With heart of feather, tongue of fire,
A cupid carrying his lyre!
'Tis he, the bard of voice divine,
Sweet melodist of love and wine;
He on whom monks and minions rail,
The muse's little nightingale:—
Yes, Erin, 'tis thy patriot son,
Thy simple, sweet Amcreon!
Moore, though around thy laurelled head
No splendid ray can shine,
Save that which heaven's own light will shed
On such a brow as thine—

Yet, when you die,
Genius will grieve upon thy tomb,
Freedom lament thy early doom,
And fresh in Erin's fond heart bloom

The verdure of thy memory!
Thy dirge shall be the lover's sigh;

Thy monument the myrtle tree;
While widowed Nature, weeping nigh,
Shall close her poet's obsequy.

Nor shall one tear less sacred fall

Upon the grave of worth,
Because unblazoned is its pall,
And titleless its birth—

Away, away, the herald's scorn,
Full many a noble heart was humbly born!
'Mid the heath of the valley the violet blows;
Through the sands of the desert the fountain-spring
flows;

And e'en on the briar-bush blossoms the rose,
With the breath and the beauty of morn.

Take the lyre, thou child of song!
But keep it not from Cupid long;
Yet can the god of love refuse
A moment of his darling muse,
To celebrate a land which pays
To him such pure and pious praise;

To celebrate, in deathless strain,
Its honour, without spot or stain,
Its spirit brave, its social glee,
Its beauteous hospitality—
Its fire, and mirth, and martial fame
Concentered all in Moira's name?
Yes! if in human hearts there be
A symbol of the Deity,
A feeling of celestial birth,
Which raises man above the earth,
Ennobles life, and death defies,
And wings our spirit for the skies,
Moira, 'tis that which gives to thee
The patriot's immortality—
It lends thy star a ray more bright,
Sheds on thy name a purer light,
And gives thee, more than wit or birth,
The meed of honesty and worth.
In faith it glads my heart to say
That even in thy winter day,
There is a patriot pure and free,
To think, poor Erin, upon thee—
To sweep, with angel hand, aside
The lures of luxury and pride;
And, great in all the world can give,
Alone for thee contented live.
Yet, Erin, few there surely are,
And oh! be these from memory far,

Who do not love to think on thee
And the pure joys of infancy.
No matter where the exile goes,
O'er sultry sands or Alpine snows,
Or where no mortal foot before
Had dared the desert to explore;
Where wild tornadoes pour their wrath,
Or serpents hiss along his path:
At night, when, wearied and alone,
He rests upon the shapeless stone,
E'en o'er that broken hour of sleep
Delicious thoughts of home will sweep,
And his hushed spirit give a tear
To all that charmed and soothed it there:
The hazel wood, the village green,
Of his rude boyish sports the scene—
The woodbine bower, the hawthorn glade,
Where first he met his mountain maid;
With all the loves of that sweet soil
Where friendship gave a charm to toil,
And Mirth lent Poverty a smile.

Dear native land, though distant now,
The days when, o'er thy mountain's brow,
With footstep light and spirit gay,
I brushed the morning dew away,
Or paused to mark the rural grave
Where sleep the ashes of the brave—

Still ever dear shall be the scene,
Though savage oceans roll between;
Still shalt thou be my midnight dream,
Thy glory still my waking theme;
And every thought and wish of mine,
Unconquered Erin, shall be thine! 8

Oh! had I but the envied power
To sing thy brighter, earlier hour,
Then would I sing the happy day
Which saw thee reign with regal sway:
Then would I sing thine age of gold,
Thy virgins bright and heroes bold:
And every trump should sound their fame,
And every tongue should bless their name,
And every flower should droop its head,
And on their tomb its odour shed:
But to no human tongue 'tis given
To use the privilege of heaven.
Celestial beings chant their dirge,
The sirens sing it on the surge,
It makes the winds of heaven to sigh,
So sweet and sad its melody.

When evening comes, on pinion gray,
To weep for the departed day,
The spirits of an higher sphere
Are sent by the Immortal here;

They come, a seraph choir, to mourn
Upon the hero's laurelled urn:
And so unearthly is their song,
The peasant, as he goes along,
Invents a thousand marvels dire
To tell around his rustic fire—
He tells of many an elfin fay
He saw amid the moonbeams play;
Or, shooting through the midnight gloom,
To guard the slumbers of the tomb!
But yet not sprung from terror pale
Is that poor peasant's simple tale;
For if you rise ere early morn
Or Echo hears the hunter's horn,
The sylvan landscape will appear
Glistening with many a dewy tear—
The tears which angel eyes have shed
In sorrow for the sacred dead.
But, to see the hallowed sight,
You must steal an hour from night:
For so divine the tears that grace
The hero's sacred resting place,
That, when the sun with vision bright,
Beholds them glittering in the light,
He sends, by heaven's own desire,
A ray of his celestial fire
To kiss the heathbell's weeping cup,
And drink the pearly odour up.

Yet, Goldsmith, Orpheus of the wild!
Nature's own darling village child,
Could but a patriot prayer of mine
Draw thy sweet spirit from its shrine,
Then might I wake the mournful tone,
And angels think it was their own.
Then, Burke, should thy immortal form
Arise, majestic, 'mid the storm,
As when fair Justice saw thee stand
With client nations at thy hand,
While wealth, and rank, and beauty hung
Upon the magic of thy tongue!
Oh! 'twas a noble sight to see
How talent shadowed pedigree;
And thou, poor orphan of the sod,
Proved thy nobility from God!
And Berkely, thou, in vision fair,
With all the spirits of the air,
Shouldst come to see, beyond dispute,
'Thy deathless page thyself refute;
And in it own that thou couldst view
Matter—and it immortal too.
And Wit, and Comedy, and Love,
Should come with Congreve from above;
And Swift, the wonder of the age: 9
Statesman, yet patriot; priest, yet sage;
Who sought the mob, admired the crown,
And shamed the church, yet graced the gown.

Impassioned without love or fear,
Witty, yet solemn and severe;
So much at war his word and deed,
Antithesis was still his creed:
And sure the life must love inspire,
Where all find something to admire.
Fond of the nation he disowned,
Still on her hour of hope he frowned;
But, when her hour of struggle came,
And Ireland half embraced her shame,
Then was *his* hour—the champion rose,
Terror alike of friends and foes;
Unarmed, save in the mighty zeal
His country forced his heart to feel;
In shame, and pride, and sorrow strong,
The scornful patriot rushed along,
Like lightning on the slumberer's eyes,
Flashing his glorious energies—
Nor did the noble ardour die,
Till Ireland could her foes defy;
And its last fierce indignant ray
Vanished amid the blaze of day;
Then, then his native soul returned,
And e'en the soil he saved he spurned!
To friendship and to feeling dear,
Immortal Sterne should next appear,
With Cupid gaily running after,

Encircled in a myrtle crown,
And covered with a cleric gown,
The jest of jollity and laughter.

Thou, magic Spenser, shouldst be seen, 10
Ranging the fairies on the green,
To tell them how, one winter night,
When moon and stars refused their light,
And not a sprite could vigil keep,
You stole upon their sovereign's sleep,
And took a wand of wonder dread,
Which gave a charm to all you said!
Nor shouldst thou, Farquhar, absent be, 11
Child of wit, and soul of glee!
Swan of the stage! whose dying moan
Such dulcet numbers poured along,
That Death grew captive at the tone,
And staid his dart to hear the song!

Source of refined and rational delight,
Through joy to virtue see the stage invite.
Amusing moralist! whose splendid art,
Seriously gay, amends and soothes the heart,
With willing homage at thy shrine I bow,
To pay the humble, but the grateful vow.

Long had the rival muses urged their claim
To the green garland of poetic fame:

High and superb, upon her throne of fire,
The tragic sister swept her living lyre;
While, at the call of their commanding queen,
Th' embodied passions rushed into the scene,
Fear, Anger, Frenzy strain their aching eyes,
As Mossop rages and Fitzhenry dies.
What heart but bleeds, while Cato smiles in tears,
And sire and patriot in Quin appears?
Who, with a soul, can nature's pang endure
While Barry trembles in the tortured Moor;
And see, for ages shaded from our view,
Maclin give life to the revengeful Jew?
Fired at the sight, Melpomene arose,
Smiled on the scene, and half forgot her woes;
Sure of success, she viewed the victor train,
And hailed the glories of her rising reign.

Clive and Comedy came together,
Waving wild their wand of feather,
Round and round the antic throng,
Led along

By their airy song.

Lewis, linked with Ease and Laughter,
Beckoning Humour lingering after,
Half willing, half afraid to fly,
And lose the light of Jordan's eye;
Jordan still, with airy glee,
Wheeling round Euphrosyne,

Robbing now her rosy wreath,
Catching now her balmy breath;
Little loves and graces bound her,
Sylphs on airy wing surround her:
Her printless footsteps fresh luxuriance fling,
And flowers and perfumes breath eternal spring!
Lulled by the magic of her honied strain,
The rival muses owned th' alternate reign,
With mutual feeling each their feuds forsook,
Combined their efforts and created Cooke.
Lord of the soul, magician of the heart,
Pure child of Nature, fosterchild of Art,
How all the passions in succession rise,
Heave in thy soul and lighten in thine eyes!
Beguiled by thee, old Time, with aspect blithe,
Leans on his sceptre and forgets his sithe;
Space yields its distance; ancient glories live,
Ages elapse; remotest scenes revive;
For thee Creation half inverts her reign,
And captive Reason wears a willing chain.

But, hark to that strain of delight in the sky,
Winging the breeze with its melody!
With what magic it floats on the incense of even!
How sweetly it softens the chorus of heaven!
Hark!—is it a strain from some spirit of fire,
Or the sweet swelling echo of Albany's lyre? / 2.

Perhaps 'tis the welcome of bliss to the brave,
Or an anthem of love from the maid of the wave;
Or it may be the song of a sinner forgiven!

Alas! 'tis not long since that heavenly strain
Awoke all its echoes, but woke them in vain;
Like the harp of the winter we hung it in air,
And smiled on the shivering song of despair.
Oh heaven! was it meet, on a pitiless shore,
"No parent to cherish, or friend to deplore,"
Ere the peach-down of infancy faded its bloom,
Sweet Poesy's child should descend to the tomb,

Unprotected and poor?

Was there none in the circle of fashion's career?
No singular spendthrift in folly's gay sphere?
No penitent Cræsus from India's domain?
No mitre, embarrassed with sinecure gain?
No patriot pensioned—no Walpole in place,
Who prompted, perhaps, to astonish his race,
Would, from vanity outwards, or conscience within,
Save the orphan of genius from sorrow and sin?
But though cheered by no solace and sunned by
no ray,

This world's dreary winter has withered away,

With many a sigh—.

There are some to thy evergreen grave who will
bring

The fragrance of summer and flowrets of spring,

And weeping thy late, but sad, requiem sing, / 3

Poor Dermody!

Crowned by a bright sunbeam, and shrouded in
storm,

With a sigh for the present and smile on the
past,

The meteors of heaven unveiling his form,

The spirit of Ossian should ride on the blast—

Oh! when he awoke his wild harp of the mountain,

Or shed the sweet light of his slumbering song,

How the moss-covered rock, with its crystalline
fountain,

Would pour forth the bodiless, magical throng,

To catch but one cadence and boast it along!

How the holy sound

Would call around

The vision of former years!

The virgins bright,

In their mantles of light,

Would forget the virgin's fears;

And the fire-edged cloud,

Show its warrior crowd

Careering their airy spears.

Full many a day

Has rolled away,

Since they heard that tuneful tongue,

And many a sword
Has lost its lord,
Since simple Ossian sung.
The pride of his string
Were a rural race,
Their solace the spring,
Their subsistence the chase;
And they lay down to rest
From their frugal repast,
Content should Fate bring
A rude cairn at last! 14

Sure 'tis a sad, yet soothing sight,
To view the desert scene,
Where once the sword, in Freedom's fight,
Waved from countless warriors bright,
Each shooting, like a star of night,
His splendour o'er the green.
When tired at eve, the pilgrim leans
Upon some rocky pile,
Of days long gone the lone remains,
Saved by their rudeness from the Vandal reigns,
Which, red and ruthless, swept the plains
Of this ill-fated isle.
He little thinks the mossy stones
Beneath his feet,
Afford some hero's hallowed bones
Their cold retreat—

Once saw the pomp of mourning pride,
And heard the virgin's sigh
Swelling the sweet and solemn tide
Of ancient minstrelsy!
Perhaps, e'en there, on Fingal's arm 15
A thousand heroes hung,
While Ossian, music of the storm,
The battle anthem sung;—
Or there Æmania's palace rose, 16
In more than regal pride,
Ollam inhaled a nation's woes, 17
Conn's fiery sceptre crushed her foes,
Or noble Oscar died. 18

Alas! for thee, Erin, gone by is thy fame,
Forgotten thy glories and blasted thy name;
And thou standst, like a tree, by the lightning's
flame,
Of vigour and verdure and promise bereft;
And, as if to enhance, while they solace, thy shame,
The tombs of thy fathers are all thou hast left.
Yet the spot where their ashes now sleep, in the
shade,
May one day relume faded Liberty's fire,
The vow of the brave be triumphantly paid,
And his sword, a bright homage, with reverence
laid
At the shrine of its impulse, the tomb of his
sire!

Though 'twere treason to speak it, yet still in our
blood,

The flame of our fathers shall glow,
At once, the bright hope of a better abode,
And the ray of this prison below.

As weary and sad, by the winter-wind driven,
The tempest-tossed mariner sees from afar,
Smiling its peace on the turbulent heaven,
The mild beaming light of some glimmering
star:

Thus, Erin, though tempest thy triumph enshrouds,
And Night rolls around thee her car of the clouds,
No darkness shall dim thee, no tempests affright,
While thou seest in the heavens thy father's sweet
light;

'Mid the gloom of the storm that clear light shall
arise;

The light of the brave, of the good, and the wise;
Through tempests still lucid, through centuries
young,

And thou, native Ossian, long gladden our eyes,
Though Scotia, unfilial, the solace denies, / 9

Sweet bard of tradition! bright beacon of song!

Nor shouldst thou, youthful shade, unsung remain,
Though kings denounced and bigots cursed the
strain;

Thou, whose rich bud just breathed upon the land,
Blushed on our crimes, and bowed beneath their
hand.

Ah, why, thou pure, soul-breathing floweret of
May!

Did you spring in our climate of storm?
Some holier land, and some happier day,
Would have opened its bosom, and brightened its
ray,

To chase every pestilent phantom away,
That frightened thy lily form!

And in time thou wouldst pour, sweetest blossom
of spring,

Such balm-breathing gratitude there,
That the wild bird would come by thy beauties to
sing,

And shed, as he passed, from his odorous wing,
All Araby's fabled air!

Though cold in the desert thy relics repose,
'Mid the shriek of the winter blast,
Like flame in our heart's blood thy martyrdom
glows,

And will while memory last.

And yet the wild heath-bell that sighs in the wind,
As it shadows the patriot's grave,
Is dearer by far to the sensitive mind,
Than the marble enshrining a slave.

It was meet, youthful shade; for a barbarous age,
To squander, with bloody and bigotted rage,
The glories of genius away:
But, like mist on the mountain, the cloud shall be
driven,
When the orbit eclipsed will career throughout
heaven,
The light of a purer day!

Lo! by the sod where classic Barry sleeps, *20*
Genius, low bending, droops the wing and weeps;
No shadows afloat—no sounds awoken there,
Save the sweet sigh of the surrounding air,
Or purer accent of some angel's prayer:
While heaven's bright bow, with orient ray serene,
Sweeps its high arch, and consecrates the scene.

Oh thou! to whose pure glance was given,
While yet on earth, the opening heaven;
Though, in thine own elysium placed,
With circling saints and heroes graced,
Whether, with glance of fire you fling
Young roses on Aurora's wing,
Or circle Iris, in her flight,
With Fancy's gayest robe of light,
Or deck at eve th' autumnal sky,
In all its rich variety—

Refuse not thou one summer smile
Upon the lonely western isle,
Where first, around thy infant head,
The sun its loveliest shadows shed,
And nature blessed thy early view
With every rich and varied hue,
That decks the rose, or prisms the morning dew!

Woody from his silent rustic tomb,
The shade of Carolan should come, *21*
And see his harp of music hung

Upon some hoary hawthorn tree,
And hear the little robin's tongue,
Learning its plaintive melody:

While every warbler brings its young,
To hear the lovely vesper sung,
And round the choir the fairies play,
And dance their magic roundelay;
Till the last breath of parting even,

Sweet and slowly floating by,
Carries the concert up to heaven,
All fragrance and all harmony.

Soft as the murmuring winds that shake

The dew-drop from the woodbine spray,
Soft as the airs that stir the lake,
At the rich solemn close of day,
Is Carolan's bewitching lay.

But cease, my soul, the effort vain,
Nor venture such a sacred strain:
Yet oh! my country, could I throw
One gleam of comfort on thy wo,
The holy solace should be heard,
Though fate itself should wing the word.
Dear country! if my counsel light,
A shepherd's whistle in the night,
Might claim a reverence from thee,
Though but for its sincerity—
I'd tell thy injured honoured land,
In patient dignity to stand;
But oh! from thee and thine be far
The rashness of a rebel war!
How often, in my school-boy day,
Have I renounced the school-boy's play,
To wander lonely o'er thy green,
And see again some favourite scene;
Or up thy emerald hills to roam,
And watch the curling smoke of home;
Or think upon the mother dear,
Who then on me was thinking there;
Or ask the peasant, as he toiled,
And, happy at my fancy, smiled,
If he thought the ocean bold,
Which awfully beneath us rolled,
Ever saw such fruits and flowers,
Such mountains, fields, and mossy bowers,

Or such a lovely land as ours?
Oh then it joyed my heart to see
The patriot son of industry,
Hold out to me his rugged hand,
And swear, not such another land
Our sovereign had at his command:
Or give me half his scanty store,
And sorrow that he had no more.
Then would he, in his simple way,
Along the neighbouring valley stray,
To tell me all that surge had seen,
And all the glories of that green,

In Erin's elder day: *22*

Alas! where once the palace rose,
And, spread its gales, the festal bower,
There now the desert hawthorn blows,
Or, browsing on the woodbine flower,
The red deer fearless stray!
That spot where, as the sunset threw
On wood and lake its purpling hue,
The harp and horn both sounded high
The call of graceful revelry.
Now nought is heard but, shrill and harsh,
The bittern booming in the marsh,
Or the lone shepherd's shout of fear,
To fright the savage prowling near.
Now all is featureless and lone,
Save where, upon the heathy ground,

Lie the huge heaps of printless stone,
By time and tempest scattered round.
Bleaching in the mountain blast,
And mouldering in the mountain rain,
The symbol of the ages past,
The ruins frown in proud disdain, 23
Casting their chill and mournful shade
Upon the spot, where low are laid
Their mighty chiefs and warrior men,
Their murdered friends and heroes slain,
And all the trophies of their glorious reign!

Gone are the days when the western gale
Awoke every voice of the lake and the vale,
With the harp, and the lute, and the lyre;
When Justice uplifted her adamant shield,
And Valour and Freedom illumined the field
With a sword and a plumage of fire!
Gone are the days when our warriors brave
Bounded the surge of the ocean wave;
When the chief of the hills held his banner of
green,
And the shamrock and harp on that banner were
seen,
As the pastoral hero assembled his band,
To lead them to war, at his monarch's command—
Yes, his own native monarch, unfettered and free
As the wild bird that perched on his mountain
tree—

Ah! where are that monarch and mountain tree
now?

And where is the wild bird that perched on its
bough?

The wild bird's feather now wings the dart
That drinks the red blood of the hero's heart;
The monarch has fall'n, and the mountain tree
Bears Erin's hope o'er the distant sea!

But, Erin, you never had mourned the sight,
Had you brandished your spear in your own good
fight:

Had you boldly stood on your mountain crag
And waved o'er the valley your sea green flag,
Soon, soon, should the stranger have found his
grave

Beneath the red foam of the ocean wave:
And the stranger's fate should be told by the
gore

Of the stranger's corse on his native shore!
But he came not in arms, and our generous isle,
Unheeding his sword was betrayed by his smile!

Yet fraud or force attempt in vain
To sway the patriot's ardent soul,
Proudly it vindicates its reign,
Crumbles the tyrant's impious chain,
And soars sublime above control!

A moment paused the heart of fire,

That knew not to deceive,

More in compassion than in ire,

O'er human guilt to grieve.

A moment fell the pious tear,

To parted freedom given:

Not on a darling parent's bier

Could infant eyes shed drops more dear

Than that, to heaven.

The patriot's bosom panted high

As grief's soft image died,

And blushing, on his frenzied eye,

Rose Erin's injured pride.

Roused at the sight, the mountaineer,

With ready hand,

Seized his artless rustic spear;

Throughout the land,

The rock and the glen

Sent their warrior men

To the patriot field;

And the side of the hill,

As it shone o'er the rill,

Seemed a living shield!

At the bugle's shrill breath

The stag, in affright,

Shot over his heath,

Like an arrow of light:

Our isle was awake,
From the bray to the brake,
At the summons of war;
And the spears of the brave, *24*
From the summits afar,
Crested the wave,
Like a shooting star!

If humanity shows to the God of the world,
A sight for his fatherly eye,
'Tis that of a people with banner unfurled,
Resolved for their freedom to die.
'Tis a spark of the Deity bursting to light,
Through the darkness of human control,
That fires the bold war-arm in liberty's fight,
And flames from the patriot, burning and bright,
Through the eye of a heavenly soul.
Oh! was it not noble and fair to behold
Our isle, like a warrior, laced,
With her spear of the hills and her buckler bold,
Her banner of green and her helm of gold, *25*
Stand ready for battle braced?

The sun on that day,
Sent his holiest ray,
To brighten the patriot plume;
The shamrock was seen
With a lovelier green,
And the air shed a sweeter perfume.

The face of our isle
Wore a heavenly smile,
As if conscious and proud of her brave,
And the laurel flower,
At that holy hour,
Bowed its bloom o'er the warrior's grave,
To tell him the land
He had died to defend,
Was no-longer the home of a slave.

No, there is not a spot where the pious are laid,
But an angel is hovering near,
To guard their high slumber and gladden their
shade,
With the triumph of purity here;
And Nature on that angel eye
Still casts a glance of sympathy.

Ye sainted spirits of the air,
To whose angelic guardian care
The patriot's cause was given,
Oh, on the memory of that day,
Beam down the purest holiest ray
That glows in heaven!
And thou, lamented honoured sire,
Too early lost for Erin's fame,
Pour from on high thy hallowed fire,

And purge away thy country's shame;
Prison of islands—land without a name!

Leinster, if birth alone had made thee great,
Nor worth confirmed the ordinance of fate;
If midst the titled rabble thou hadst stood
A lie to rank, a ridicule on blood,
Content to shine amongst a shameless band,
The gilded robber of thy native land,
Thou shouldst have gone to time's remotest age,
The blot and burthen of the poet's page;
Thy vice immortal, thy enjoyment o'er,
Verdant in shame when thou couldst sin no more!
'Tis the high mission of the muse's choir
To soar through ether on a wing of fire,
Shed round the humble saint their holy ray,
And circle guilt with an eternal day:
They beam on virtue its immortal grace,
They blast the wreath of the successful base,
Roll their high spheres harmoniously along,
Stars in their course, and sirens in their song!
Leinster, when traitors stained the robe of power,²
When ermined tyrants ruled their little hour,
When guilt was greatness, and corruption wealth
And sacred piety an act of stealth—
'Twas thine to vindicate the claim of birth,
Show that e'en still a noble might have worth,

And prouder dignities than dukedoms prove
In the heart's homage of thy country's love.
Patriot, thou art not gone—thy holy name
Still from our hills a beacon light shall flame!

Devouring fate may close the bad man's doom,
Crumble the throne or crush the pompous tomb,
But virtue bruised exhales a purer breath,
Sighs fragrance forth, and triumphs over death.
Thus some proud oak high shoots its stately form,
Blooms in the blast and strengthens in the storm,
Pride and protection of its native glade,
The winter's grandeur and the summer's shade!—
When all its verdant honours shrink with age
And leave it shieldless to the tempest's rage,
The hoary sovereign revives his reign,
Breasts the high wave and bounding o'er the main,
Still mocks the storm and still defends the plain.

Celestial vision of that sacred day,
Blush down thy grace and beautify my way.
From shapeless ruins and a dreary wild,
Where once the harvest of the hamlet smiled,
From foreign pride and native folly free,
My wearied spirits seek repose in thee.
Proudly the glories of thy reign I view,
Hang o'er the scene and every charm renew;

Fancy again the patriot banner sees
Wave mid the music of the mountain breeze;
Again beholds rejoicing commerce ride,
Free as the winds that waft her o'er the tide,
Or sighs, entranced, where once in truth she hung
On the sweet tone of Flood's harmonious tongue. 27

Thou, mystic pile! our glory and our shame!
Ray of our pride and ruin of our name!
Where are the days when pure thy patriots rose
To raise our greatness and redress our woes;
When Grattan thundered round thy ample dome,
And patriot genius found a kindred home;
When silver Burgh poured on the nation's ear 28
Strains such as Athens had been wont to hear;
While smiling Erin claimed thee for her own,
And Reason hailed her decorated throne!

Alas! where once uprose the temple's porch,
And holy breathings woke the altar's torch,
Where patriot tongues their sacred music poured,
Now heartless traders heap their sordid hoard!
Rapine exulting spreads her impious spoil, 29
And withered Avarice affects a smile!
But cease, indignant heart, lament no more;
Let trade reign still where triumphed trade before.
The time must come when Heaven's avenging hand
Shall smite the dome and vindicate the land,

Showing its pillared pride in ruins hurled,
A wonder and a warning to the world.
Britain beware—nor vainly think that he,
Faithless to us, can e'er be true to thee.
When conscience, country, kindred plead in vain,
Dragged, all dishonoured, to the shrine of gain—
Can foreign climes assume a dearer claim?
Can alien sighs awake the patriot flame?
Believe it not—the traitor's impious soul
Blasphemes at grace and banishes control;
It loathes all nurture but the fruit of crime;
It counts by guilty deeds the course of time,
Sees hell itself but as the idiot's rod;
Deifies guilt and mortgages its God!

Heavens! when I see this lovely soil,
The tyrant's sport, the bigot's spoil,
Contending furies shake my frame;
Fevered with rage, revenge, and shame,
I call on Mercy's self to fly,
Armed with the sword of Destiny,
And sweep away the murderous brood,
Carousing on my country's blood,
Who spurn the path a Saviour trod,
To bend before a party god.

Too long has meek Religion bled
Beneath the Christian hand,

Too long has persecution shed
Its poison through the land.

Oh! if no tongue of holy grace
Should bid the lawless tempest cease,
Let suppliant Erin's voice be heard,
Though weak her tongue, yet wise her word,
The word of peace.

Think, think, sons of Erin, on all we have lost,
Oh! think on our former pride;
Then unite and be free, nor relinquish the boast
For which our brave ancestors died.
Remember the glory and pride of your name,
Ere the cold-blooded Sassenach tainted your fame,
When merit was fortune, for virtue was power,
And Reason, not Bigotry, guided the hour.
Though now all dreary and decayed
Our ancient glories lie,
Some blessed spirits love their shade,
And guard their memory.
Tread but the spot, though barren now,
Where meek Religion's angel-vow,
In pious hope, was poured;
Or stray along the desert heath,
Where Genius sighed its parting breath,
Or martyred Virtue smiled on death,
Or Valour waved the sword—

Though want and wildness reign around,
Nor earth give soil, nor echo sound,
An awe upon the heart will steal,
And conscious Nature's instinct feel

'Tis holy ground.

Is there within the isle a soul
But owns the sad sublime control,
As oft, by patriot impulse led,
To where Kinkora's palace shed 30
Its splendours on the flood;
Or Clonmacnoise upreared its head 30

Amid the sacred wood,
Or—oh! forever be the name
Circled with glory's brightest flame,
Proud Tara's temple stood? 31

Tara, the day of thy splendour is o'er;
Tara, the grace of thy glory is gone;
Where thy column's high capital triumphed before
The wind-beaten traveller sees not a stone.
Through thy shadowless moor the night bird
screams;
O'er the moss of thy ruin the bright moon beams,
While round thee chill Winter his thousand streams
Rolls cheerless and lone.
And yet, thou pale moonbeam, there once was an
hour

When you strayed o'er a lovelier scene;

As sculptured arch and antique tower,
Blending their shade, 'mid the hawthorn bower,
With ivyed moat and myrtle flower,
 You shadowed o'er the green.
And yet, thou shrill ill-omined bird of the night,
 There once was an holier time,
When the verdureless heath you now fill with af-
 fright
Streamed with harmony's silver light;
While the stars of peace and the swords of fight
 Cheered the harp's sweet chime—
The heath where winter now rolls along,
 The rage of his mountain tide,
Once saw the pride of the regal throng
Mingle its courtly halls among,
While sweet and wild the soul of song
 In varied echoes died.
O Tara, but 'twas fair to see
Thy court's assembled majesty.
All that man deems great or grand,
 All that God made fair;
The holy seers, the minstrel band, 32
Heroes bright and ladies bland,
Around the monarchs of the land,
 Were mingled there.

Alas! and shall that aged pile
Never in ancient splendour smile?

And shall the lonely owlet hoot
Forever through its ivy'd wall?
And shall no more the lover's lute
Awake the happy signal-call,
Or grace the pleasures of its stately hall?
Oh never! if in evil hour
A foreign foot attain our soil;
Oh never! if the despot's power
Pollutes our pure, our lovely isle.
His aid is murder in disguise;
His triumph freedom's obsequies;
His faith is fraud, his wisdom guile;
Creation withers in his smile—
Mid ruin upon ruin hurled,
He flames the Etna of the world.
No offering can avert his wrath,
No human feeling cross his path.
See Spain in his embraces die,
His ancient friend, his firm ally;
See hapless Portugal, who thought
A *common creed* her safety brought—
A common creed! alas, his life
Has been one bloody, impious strife.
Beneath his torch the altars burn
And blush on the polluted urn—
Beneath his Christian foot is trod
The symbol of the Christian God—

The plundered fane, the murdered priest.
The holy pontiff's age oppressed,
Religion's blush and Nature's sigh
Proclaim Napoleon's *piety*!

Where'er his locust legions veer,
Ruin and wo and want are there—
And dreams of future murders sweep
Across their fevered hour of sleep.
Thus, mid the desert's cheerless blight,
A vulture pauses in his flight,
And on some rock's congenial breast,
Unwilling takes his withered rest,
Again on Rapine's wing to rise
The taint and terror of the skies.
Peasant of Erin, think on this,
Encircled by domestic bliss;
And when, with wife and children dear,
You take your sweet though homely cheer,
Teach them to bless their heavenly sire
That they enjoy their evening fire,
And live where they can share, with thee,
The profits of their industry.

I love thee Erin; yet before
The Gallic fiend should taint thy shore,
Myself would seize the flaming brand,
And burn the verdure of the land.

In vain has Nature blessed our isle,
And banished venom from its soil,
In vain adorned our landscape green,
With hill and vale and varied scene—
In vain with music filled our brakes,
With tufted islets gemmed our lakes,
And such high mountain glories shed,
That heaven rests upon their head—
In vain bestowed us beauty bright,
'To grace the day and bless the night,
If thus we trust the tempter's voice,
And violate our paradise. *EB*

A purer star ascends the sky,
And beams its radiance from on high,
On many a glorious trophy won,
And many a deed of valour done,
Adorning thy captivity!
Sweetly it smiles, as if to say,
Soon, soon shall dawn the rising day
Of such a nation's liberty.
Strange that a noble generous land,
Enabling others to withstand
The foreign tyrant's fierce command,
Should not itself be free!
Strange that a warrior, bold and brave,
Should o'er the foe his banner wave,
Yet reap no fruit from victory!

No matter what the bar to fame,
Nor how disqualified the claim,
Erin has sent her warriors bright, 34
To win the laurels of the fight,

From him her chief and champion bold,
Down to the simple peasant-name
Whose whole nobility is fame.—

He who on Barossa's height 35—

Stopped the eagle in his flight,

And spurned its crest of gold,

No, not a trophy of the day

Which Erin did not bear away.

And see where comes the god of war,

In his blood-emblazoned car!

Its front of fire, its seat of steel,

The forked lightning is its wheel;

And see, triumphant with him, see

The laurelled goddess, Victory!

They pause—she waves her falchion sharp,

Sounds her high horn, and leans upon the harp.

Sudden the glories of the elder day,

Roused at her call, in splendid vision play:

Tradition's cloud moves slowly on her sight,

Gemmed with the stars of legendary might;

A smile celestial hails the laurelled train,

Such as of old upon the battle plain,

Beamed on their helmed heads, triumphant o'er
the slain.

Nor deem it strange a smile so bland
Should greet that brave heroic band;
For though, through time's dark vista we
Their twinkling forms but faintly see,
They burn as brilliantly above,
Fanned with the breath of angels' love,
As when they decked their distant day
With glory's pure meridian ray.

Not Dettingen's undying name, 36
Nor Fontenoy's eternal fame, 37
Nor e'en Cremona's classic flame, 38

With purer lustre play—

Monarchs may fall beneath their foes,
Ages elapse, and nations die,
But round the hero's hallowed brows,
Pure and imperishable glows
The halo of eternity.

Still hovering round that vestal light,
Angels awake their airy lyre,
And still, to feed that vision bright,
The comet rolls his flood of fire.

Thus, Wellington, when from us here,
'Mid many a mourning nation's tear,
Thy glowing orb must disappear,
It shall arise,
In brighter skies,
Our path to cheer;

And many a future child of war,
Amid the battle's adverse sky,
 Shall watch afar,
 That holy star,
 Still leading on to victory;
And he shall see that leading light,
Girt with many a satellite;
The heroes now who fling their shield
Before thee in the battle field,
 When thou art gone,
 Shall guard thy throne,
 Superb on high,
 Still catch thy day,
 Reflect its ray,
 And cheer their isle
 With the bright smile
 Of constellated majesty.

Rich in hereditary fame,
Rich in his own ennobled name,
Rich with Egypt's garland fair,
But richer in his country's prayer,
'Mid trophies without envy won,
'Thy orb shall circle, Hutchinson.
And Cole shall shine o'er Maida's field,
And Pack, unknowing how to yield
Nor go without thy bright reward,
Thou *name-redeeming* Beresford—

Nor thou, brave laughter-loving Doyle,
 Pure symbol of thy native soil:
 Long may'st thou lead thy hero band,
 Guards of their prince and glories of their land.

But Muse forbear—as well thy power
 Might count the varying vernal shower,
 Or leaf on the autumnal wood,
 Or billow on the wintry flood,
 Or aught fantastic shadow vain,
 That flits across the wildered brain,
 As limit, by thy humble page,
 The deeds of each revolving age:
 For through the retrospect of time,
 The range of every varied clime,
 Thy country's glories soar sublime.

* * * * *

* * * * *

Weak was the hand, unskilled the tongue,
 And the rude lyre uncouthly strung,
 Which thus has sighed its simple strain,
 Poor country, o'er thy prostrate reign:
 But yet how could I silent see,
 Though all unused to minstrelsy,
 Thy regal pride, thine ancient name,
 Thy trophied chiefs, thy martial fame;

Condemned to bear the ribald jest,
At random on thy patience cast,
E'en by the reptile vermin brood
Who feed and fatten on thy blood.
And yet perhaps this artless lay

May wake my country's latent fire,
Or cheer her exile far away,
Or string again her silent lyre.

Haply beyond the distant sea,
As lone and sad the wanderer strays,
Musing, poor Erin, upon thee,

Scene of his happy infant days,
Some soothing breeze may waft the song,
Though simple yet sincere, along;
And grief's tempestuous throb subside
At the faint tone of former pride.

Oh Erin! blest shall be the bard,
And sweet and soothing his reward,
Can he but wake one patriot thrill
For days, though gone, remembered still,
Whate'er may be his humble lot, 40
By foes denounced, by friends forgot,
'Thine is his soul, his sigh, his smile—
GEM OF THE OCEAN!—LOVELY EMERALD ISLE!

NOTES.



NOTES ON THE POEM.

Note 1.

Look on Brian's verdant grave.—Page 12.

THE most vigorous and dangerous enemy whom the northern foreigners experienced in Ireland was the hero so celebrated in the annals of his country by the name of Brian Borhoime. The infancy of Brian was spent in the field, in which, when general to his brother, the king of Munster, he particularly distinguished himself against the Danes who had invaded Ireland. On his brother's death he was chosen king, and his reign presents a bright assemblage of every virtue which can endear the heart, and every talent which can adorn the reason. In war, Victory pursued his path; in peace, the arts embellished his repose. Property respected, oppression punished, religion venerated, invasion crushed, literature encouraged, and law maintained, were the sacred characteristics of an age which the historian records with delight, and the monarch may study with improvement. A fresh irruption of the Danes called the venerable hero again into action, and the sanguinary achieve-

ment of Clontarf closed, at the age of *eighty-eight*, the glorious career of a sovereign whose "hand was bent on war, but whose heart was for the peace of Erin."

The following curious description of the battle of Clontarf is extracted from O'Halloran's History of Ireland.

"At the head of 30,000 men highly appointed, Brian marched into Leinster, about the beginning of April 1014, in three divisions, and was joined by Malachie, king of Meath. He encamped, as he had done the year before, near Kilmainham. And after both armies viewing each other for some time, it was agreed to determine the fate of Ireland by a general battle on the plains of Clontarf. Early on the 23d of April, being Good-Friday, the Danes appeared formed in three separate bodies for battle, and by their dispositions Brian regulated his own. The auxiliaries from Sweden and Denmark, consisting of 12,000 men, among whom 2000 were heavy armed, commanded by Brodar and Airgiodal, formed the right division. The left, of nearly an equal number, commanded by Sitric, composed of the Danes of Ireland and their associates, and the centre composed of the flower of Leinster, under the direction of Maol-Mordha, who acted as general in chief, formed the enemy's disposition of battle. It was judged that by placing the troops in this manner, under their own leaders, it would raise a spirit of generous emulation among them, and that they would vie with each other in feats of bravery.

The right wing of the imperial army was composed of the household troops, filled up by the prime nobility of Munster. The invincible tribe of Dalgaish, with all the princes of Brian's blood, were also of this division, and Malachie with the forces of Meath. This was to be commanded by Morrogh, and Sitric, prince of Ulster. In the left wing, commanded by the king of Connaught, all the Conacian troops were placed; but, as it did not form so extended a line as the enemy's, several detachments were added to it. The troops of South Munster, under their different chiefs, with those of the Deasies, formed the central division. Brian rode through the ranks, with his crucifix in one hand, and his drawn sword in the other. He exhorted them, as they passed along, to "do their duty as Christians and soldiers in the cause of religion and their country. He reminded them of all the distresses their ancestors were reduced to by the perfidious and sanguinary Danes, strangers to religion and humanity. That these, their successors, waited impatiently to renew the same scenes of devastation and cruelty, and by way of anticipation (says he) they have fixed on the very day on which Christ was crucified to destroy the country of his greatest votaries. But that God, whose cause you are to fight, will be present with you, and deliver his enemies into your hands." So saying, he proceeded towards the centre, to lead his troops to action, but the chiefs of the army, with one voice, requested he would retire from

the field of battle, on account of his extreme age, and leave to the gallant Morrogh the chief command. At eight in the morning the signal for slaughter was given. The Dalgais, with the whole right wing, marched to attack, sword in hand, the Danes commanded by Brodar and Airgiodal: but an uncommon act of cowardice or treachery had like to have destroyed the whole army, for, at this very critical moment Malachie, with his Meathians, retired suddenly from the field of battle, leaving the rest of this body exposed to a far greater number of enemies. But Morrogh, with great presence of mind, called out to his brave Dalgais, "that this was the time to distinguish themselves, as they alone would have the unrivalled glory of cutting off that formidable body of the enemy." And now, while close engaged with battle-axe, sword, and dagger on the right, the left, under the command of the king of Connaught, hasten to engage the Danes of Leinster and their insular levies, whilst the troops of South Munster attack the apostate Maol Mordha and his degenerate Lagenians. Never was greater animosity, perseverance, and intrepidity displayed in any battle than this, as every thing depended on open force and courage. The situation of the ground admitted of no ambuscades, and none were used. They fought man to man and breast to breast, and the victors in one rank fell victims in the next. The officers and generals performed prodigies of valour. Morrogh, his son Turlogh, his brethren and kinsmen flew from place to

place, and every where left the sanguinary traces of their courage and their fortitude. The fortitude displayed by Morrogh determined Carolus and Conmaol, two Danes of distinction, to attack in conjunction this prince, and both fell by his sword. It was observed, that he, with other chiefs, had retired from the battle more than once, and after each return seemed to be possessed of redoubled force. It was to slake their thirst and cool their hands, swelled with the use of the sword and battle-axe, in an adjoining brook, over which a small guard was placed, and this the Danes soon destroyed. On rejoining his troops the last time, Sitric-Mac-Lodair, with a body of Danes, was making a fresh attack on the Dalgais—him Morrogh singled out, and, with a blow of his battle-axe, divided his body in two through his armour. The other Irish commanders in like manner distinguished themselves, though their exploits are not so particularly narrated, and it would seem, from the number of prime nobility that fell on both sides, that, besides its being a general battle, the chiefs on each side every where singled out each other to single combat.

The courage of the Irish was not to be subdued. Till near four o'clock in the afternoon did the issue of the day remain doubtful, and then it was that they made so general an attack upon the enemy, that its force was not to be resisted. Destitute of leaders, and of course of order, the Danes gave way on every side. Morrogh at this time, through

the uncommon use and exertion of the sword arm, had both his hand and arm so swelled and pained as to be unable to lift them up. In this condition he was assailed, sword in hand, by Henry, a Danish prince; but Morrogh, closing in upon him, seized him with the left hand, shook him out of his coat of mail, and prostrating him, pierced his body with his sword, by forcing its pummel on his breast, and pressing the weight of his body on it. In this dying situation of Henry, he nevertheless seized the dagger which hung by Morrogh's side, and with it gave him, at the same instant, a mortal wound. The Dane expired on the spot, but Morrogh lived till next morning, employing the intermediate time in acts of piety and devotion; in making, says my manuscript, a general confession, receiving the eucharist, and dying as an hero and a Christian should die.

The confusion became general through the Danish army, and they fled on every side. Corcoran, one of the monarch's aids-de-camp, seeing the standard of Morrogh struck, for this notified the fall of the chief, and in the general deroute unable to distinguish friend from foe, concluded that the imperial army was defeated. He hastily entered the tent of Brian, who was on his knees before a crucifix, and requested he would immediately mount his horse and escape, for all was lost. "Do you," said the hero, "and my other attendants fly. It was to conquer or die I came here, and my enemies shall not boast the killing of me by inglo-

rious wounds." So saying, he seized his sword and battle-axe, his constant companions in war, and resolutely waited the event. In the general confusion, Brodar and a few of his followers entered the royal tent. He was armed from head to foot, and yet the gallant old chief pierced his body through his coat of mail. Two more of his attendants met the same fate, and Brian received his death by a fourth.

The intrepid Sitric, prince of Ulster, the faithful companion of Brian in all his wars, was witness to the death of Morrogh, and revenged it by that of Plait, a Danish knight of great intrepidity, and by others of less note. Eagerly pursuing Brodar and his party, he saw them enter the tent of Brian, and cut to pieces the remains of them. But when he beheld the aged monarch extended on the ground, his grief was extreme. He threw himself on the dead body, the many wounds he had received in the battle burst forth afresh—he refused every assistance, and expired in the arms of his friend and faithful ally.

Thus fell the immortal Brian, one of the most uniformly perfect characters that history can produce. In twenty-five different rencontres, and twenty-nine pitched battles, did he engage his Danish and other enemies, and victory always attended his standard. But if he was terrible to his enemies in the field, he was mild and merciful to them in the cabinet, and, during his whole reign, a sin-

gle act of cruelty or injustice cannot be laid to his charge."

The learned Vallancey has given the subjoined accurate account of the harp belonging to Brian Borhoime, now in the museum of Trinity college, Dublin. I have myself seen the instrument. His harp, crown, and other regalia were given to the pope, as the price of some indulgencé, by one of Brian's sons, and deposited in the Vatican, where they remained till Henry VIII. got the harp, with the title of Defender of the Faith, from his holiness, who however kept the crown of pure gold. Henry gave the harp to the earl of Clanricarde, and down from him its identity has been accurately traced.

"The harp is 32 inches high and of extraordinary good workmanship. The sounding board is of oak; the arms of red sally: the extremity of the uppermost arm in front is capped with silver, extremely well wrought and chisselled; it contains a large crystal set in silver, and under it was another stone now lost. The buttons or ornamental knobs, at the side of this arm, are of silver. On the front arm are the arms of the O'Brian family chased in silver—the bloody hand supported by lions. On the sides of the front arm, within two circles, are two Irish wolf-dogs cut in the wood. The holes of the sounding board, where the strings entered, are neatly ornamented with escutcheons of brass carved and gilt. The large sounding holes have been ornamented probably with silver, as they

have been the object of theft. This harp has twenty-eight keys and as many string-holes, consequently there were so many strings. The foot-piece, or rest, is broken off, and the parts to which it was joined are very rotten. The whole bears evidence of an expert artist."

Vallancey's Collectanea de Rebus Hibernicis. No. 12.

2

Soul of the Seneacha.—Page 12.

A name for the old Irish bards.

3

By the tongue of Columbkille!—Page 13.

"It is to be observed," says Keating, "that St. Columcille, whose memory is so valuable among the ancient Irish, was called originally, at his baptism, by the name Criomthan: and, if we believe the book that gives an account of his vision, whose testimony may perhaps be questioned in some particulars, his guardian angel, who always attended him, was known by the name of Axall; and his evil genius, who followed him as a plague to infect his mind, and inspire him with wicked thoughts and impious designs, was called Demal. The change of his name happened when he was under the tuition of Florence, who was the tutor that instructed him in the doctrines of religion, and had the principal care and management of his education. This master allowed his pupil the liberty of one day in the week to divert himself and go to the neighbouring town to play with his companions,

who were youths of the same age; and, being a child of a very modest and agreeable disposition, his company was desired by all the children in the country, who, upon the day that he was to go abroad, would go to the door of the monastery to receive him, and, when they saw him coming to the gate, they would, from a transport of joy, lift up their hands and cry “here comes COLLUM-NACILLE,” which in the Irish language signifies *The Pigeon of the Church*, for he was a child distinguished for his meek behaviour, and the title was applied to him with great propriety. . When the Abbot Florence, who was his tutor, observed the name his companions had bestowed on him, he began to think it was the will of Heaven he should be so called, and from that time he gave him the title of COLLUM CILLE, and never used the name of Criomthan, which had been bestowed on him at his baptism.”—Amongst the old poems concerning him we find several curious records.

“This pious saint, as a religious penance,
Lay on the cold ground; and through his garments
His bones looked sharp and meagre. His poor cell
Was open to the inclemency of the winds
Which blew through the unplastered walls.”

We find his appearance at the council of Dromceat thus alluded to.

“St. Columcille arrived at Dromceat,
Followed by a retinue of his clergy,
By twenty prelates of superior order,
By forty presbyters and fifty deacons,

And thirty students in divinity
Not yet ordained."

He has a particular right to poetic celebrity, as
the same quaint verse informs us,

"The poets were secured from banishment
By *Collum Cille*, who, by his sage advice,
Softened the king's resentment, and prevailed
That every Irish monarch should retain
A learned poet—every provincial prince
And lord of a cantred were by right allowed
The same privilege and honour."

4

Of Conn of the hundred fights.—Page 13.

An old Irish monarch, whose bravery was such
that his name has descended to us with the superb
title of "Conn of the hundred battles." He reigned
twenty years, and was assassinated in the royal
palace of Tara by fifty men, habited as women,
employed by the king of Ulster.

5

Of Cormac—heart of fire.—Page 13.

This philosophic king was proclaimed in the
year of Christ 254. During his celebrated reign
he instituted three universities at Tara;—one de-
voted to the improvement of the art of war, a se-
cond to history, and a third to law. It was he
who appointed the ten officers to attend the throne,
so quaintly enumerated in the following old poem.
Having lost an eye, he was obliged by the law,

which forbade a physical defect in any Irish sovereign, to abdicate the throne. He retired to a small rural retreat called Anacoil; where, in the dignified seclusion of philosophy, he wrote his two enlightened treatises, entitled "Advice to a King," and "The Obedience due to Princes."—How truly regal was such a retirement.

"Ten royal officers for use and state,
Attend the court, and on the monarch wait;
A *nobleman*, whose virtuous actions grace
His blood, and add new glory to his race.
A *judge*, to fix the meaning of the laws,
To save the poor, and right the injured cause;
A grave *physician*, by his artful care,
To ease the sick, and weakened health repair;
A *poet*, to applaud and boldly blame,
And justly give to infamy or fame;
For without him the freshest laurels fade,
And vice to dark oblivion is betrayed.
The next attendant was a faithful *priest*,
Prophetic fury rolled within his breast;
Full of his God, he tells the distant doom
Of kings unborn and ages yet to come;
Daily he worships at the holy shrine,
And pacifies his God with rites divine;
With constant care the sacrifice renews,
And anxiously the panting entrails views,
To touch the harp the sweet *musician* bends,
And both his hands upon the strings extends;
The softest soul flows from each warbling string,
Soft as the breezes of the breathing spring!

Music has power the passions to control,
And tune the harsh disorders of the soul.
The *antiquary*, by his skill, reveals
The race of kings, and all their offspring tells,
The spreading branches of the royal line,
Traced out by him, in lasting records shine.
Three officers in lowest order stand,
And when he drives in state, attend the king's
command."

At Kirwan's great neglected name.—Page 18.

Kirwan—"the glory of the priesthood and the shame." The powers of this amazing man were so transcendant, that, when he preached, it was found necessary to surround the church with an armed force, in order to guard against the impatient multitudes which assembled to hear him. In the course of his divine mission he obtained, in the cause of charity, above sixty thousand pounds, and at length fell a victim to his great and continued exertion.

I remember, when in college, meeting the funeral of Kirwan; it was attended by the children of every charity school in Dublin; and a sad sight it was, to see the widow and the fatherless, in the procession of their departed benefactor. Those who are acquainted with the usual routine of church preferment will not be surprised to hear that this inspired genius, after a long probation of poverty, was rewarded by a deanery of six hundred pounds a

year, in a miserable fishing village in Ireland! Paul preached in the wilderness! “He called forth,” said Mr. Grattan, in the Irish house of commons, “the latent virtue of the human heart, and taught men to discover in themselves a mine of charity, of which the proprietors had been unconscious: in feeding the lamp of charity he exhausted the lamp of life. He comes to interrupt *the repose* of the pulpit, and shakes one world with the thunder of another. The preacher’s desk becomes a throne of light—around him a train, not such as crouch and swagger at the levee of viceroys—horse, foot, and dragoons; but that wherewith a great genius peoples his own state—charity in ecstasy and vice in humiliation—not as with you, in cabinet against the people, but in humiliation—vanity, arrogance, and saucy empty pride, appalled by the rebuke of the preacher, and cheated, for a moment, of their native unprobity and insolence. What reward! St. Nicholas without, or St. Nicholas within? The *curse of Swift* is upon him, to have been born an Irishman, to have been a man of genius, and to have used it for the good of his country. Had this man, instead of being the brightest of preachers, been the dullest of lawyers; had he added to dullness, venality; had he aggravated the crime of venality by senatorial turpitude, he had been a judge; or had he been born a blockhead, bred a slave, trained up in a great English family, and handed over as an household circumstance to the Irish viceroy, he should have been an Irish bishop and

an Irish peer, with a great patronage, perhaps a borough, and had returned members to vote against Ireland; and the Irish parochial clergy must have adored his venality, and deified his dulness. But, under the present system, Ireland is not the element in which a native genius can rise, unless he sell that genius to the court; and atones, by the apostasies of his conduct for the crime of his nativity."

It is impossible to deny the truth of this melancholy picture—there is not a superficial observer who may not see it every day exemplified in Ireland, in every profession, but above all others in the church. If I were to select one instance out of many, it should be that of a man on whom the public eye has long been turned with esteem for his virtue, veneration for his talent, and disgust at his neglect—need I mention the learned author of the work on the atonement. At the bar, Dr. Magee might have been a judge, in the army a general, or in the senate a minister; but in the church his gown accuses his genius, and he fades away before the excrescences of wealthy ignorance or the rinsings of decayed nobility. Happily for him his splendid talents have placed him beyond want; but it is an injustice to the world that such talents should pine neglected 'mid the seclusion of a college. *Ex uno disce omnes.*

I confess the state of the church has often struck me with extreme astonishment, and devoutly have I prayed for another reformation, after contrasting the laborious indigence of a curate, struggling to

maintain the decencies of life on seventy pounds a year, with the comparative ease of a prelate, wallowing on its luxuries in an income of twenty thousand pounds. *Væ mihi! Sus atque Sacerdos!* Of the Irish bishops I have little knowledge. They may be very good kind of men, and doubtless they are so. Dr. Stock is the only one amongst them whose name has been in our day attached to literature. The remarks have, however, been extorted from me by the melancholy neglect of the most splendid prodigy the church ever produced; and perhaps, if lord Harrowby would lend his intelligent mind to their consideration, he might infer a very simple reason why “dissenting sects are springing up like mushrooms.”—(See his lordship’s speech on the subject of the church, June 1810.)

But happier thou, fair Owenson, to feel—Page 19.

Sydney Owenson, married to sir Charles Thomas Morgan, M. D. This lady, who moves in the highest sphere of fashion, acquired great popularity by her various novels, particularly by that of the *Wild Irish Girl*, and subsequently by the *Missionary*, an eastern tale; and the enlarged edition of *St. Clair*, or the *Heiress of Desmond*—the latter is an elegant specimen of epistolary talent, and is embellished with a highly finished portrait of the fair author.

8 Unconquered Erin.—Page 24.

It is the boast of Ireland never to have been conquered. Her first invaders, the Danes, did, it is true, establish a settlement in the country; but it was rather the temporary haunt of a barbarous banditti, than the peaceful residence of established conquerors. After years of rapine, murder, and desolation, they were utterly extirpated, leaving, in place of the venerable monuments they had destroyed, a few rude forts and rocky circles, to remain at once the record of their crimes, their follies, and their failure.

It is well ascertained that the Romans never landed in Ireland; and the English historians pretend, on the faith of Tacitus, that it was from contempt, as they were informed that a single legion and a few auxiliaries would be sufficient for its conquest. It must not be forgotten, however, that this redoubted piece of information is, by Tacitus himself, put into the mouth, and derived from the authority of a faithless Irish chieftain. The Irish historian relates, that so little was Crimthan, the king of Ireland at that time, afraid of an invasion of the Romans, that he absolutely sailed to the assistance of the Picts; led an irruption into a Roman province, and returned home covered with its spoils. Surely this open violence was a much greater provocation to Rome, than that which tempted Cæsar to his incursion on England; and, so far from the authority of Tacitus being decisive on the subject, we find him, in his life of Agricola, saying

that the Romans wished to conquer Ireland, in order that the tantalizing spirit of liberty, so near them, might be taken from the view of subjugated Englishmen. "Ut libertas tanquam e conspectu tollatur."

Cæsar himself was so ignorant of Ireland, that he merely speaks of the size of it from report.—"Hibernia dimidio minor, *ut existimatur*, quam Britannia." Why Cæsar did not turn his arms to Ireland can now only become the theme of visionary calculation or ingenious conjecture. It is far from probable that he who could squander his force among the fens of Britain and their ferocious natives, would look with an eye of contempt upon the natural and spontaneous fertility of Ireland. Much more likely does it appear, that the politic commander, finding a nation of such extent, daring and dauntless, under the very eye of England, and of course superior in discipline, prudently turned to acquisitions of easier accession, from the trying contest with a *then happily united people*, where every heart was free and every hill was a fortress.

The example of Switzerland, in our own day, has shown of what such a people are capable, even against the opposition of science, intrepidity, and power the most disproportionate. Before the landing of the English, we have the testimony of Ireland's most unblushing slanderer, Cambrensis, that Ireland had extirpated her former invaders: "Hibernia," says he, "ab initio ab omni aliarum gentium incursu libera permansit."

To the consideration of this so much misrepresented invasion, which a few mendicant minions have not scrupled, in the face of history, treaties, and *their own experience*, to magnify into conquest, we now come. Henry II. was our first royal importation from Britain, and he laid the basis of that conduct of his country to ours, the contemplation of which bars all originality in future crime, by affording a precedent for every vice of which the human heart is capable. So far was Henry II., however, from having conquered Ireland, that we find him, on the 8th of October, 1175, entering into a treaty of peace with Roderic O'Connor, as monarch of the country, the terms of which treaty are still extant in Rymer's *Fœdera*. This treaty was afterwards shamefully violated by the English, even as confessed by the English historians, and the example of regal perfidy found but too many imitators in after times upon the English throne. The Irish, however, never acknowledged at any time the superiority of England: on the contrary, they always held her inhabitants in utter contempt, as a race who owed to them the little civilisation they possessed, and repaid the gift with all the ingratitude of lingering ferocity. Thus, speaking of Charles the red-handed, Geoghagan says, "Les decendans de ce vaillant prince ne prirent jamais des titres d'honneur des rois d'Angleterre, titres que plupart des anciens Irlandois méprisèrent." In confirmation of this assertion, we are told by Warner, that when Richard

II. landed in Dublin, he offered to knight some of the young chieftains; but they instantly refused him, adding that, at the age of seven years, they had received from their fathers much nobler dignities. The humblest Irishman of ancient times would have smiled at the idea of being ennobled by a people whom they considered, says Nubrigensis, as the scum of the ocean—"Impurum maris ejec-tamentum."

It is not my intention here to recapitulate the conduct of the English down to the reign of James II., because whatever gratification I might feel from beholding my countrymen supporting their assailed independence with the ardour of patriots, the pride of freemen, and the dignity of princes, would be more than counteracted by the opposite balance of atrocious provocation and perfidious arrogance. Neither my pride nor my sensibility will allow me to ransack the ruins of human nature, even to adorn the decorations of our national structure.

The treaty of Limerick has been kept precisely as all other treaties with this country were; that is, violated in every particular. King William, indeed, the Draco of Ireland, left to England a legacy of perpetual persecution to those who proved their best claim to the regal protection by their adherence to an hapless king, and to his in particular, because the victim was his father-in-law. But who could expect either gratitude or forgiveness from the gloomy murderer of Glenco? I trample on the impious ashes of that Vandal tyrant who persecu-

ted Christianity and colonized ignorance among a people, venerated for their simple faith and ancient learning! what a heart must he have had who could hunt his kindred into the very sanctuary of their misfortune, leaving it to future ages desolated and denounced, the scene of legalized barbarism and penal piety! But may his crimes have mercy—their consequences have ceased. The Christian hand of George III. has commenced the work of expiation; guided by heaven, he has dismantled the penal fabric, leaving to future sovereigns a glorious example, by following which their throne will be strengthened and their death-bed consolatory.

And Swift the wonder of the age —Page 26.

A doubt has been attempted to be cast upon the birth-place of Swift: but an account, written *by himself*, and now to be seen in the manuscript library of Dublin university, sets the question at rest. He there says he was born in Dublin. It is indeed fully proved by his own patriotic lines, in which he says,

Britain confess *this land of mine*
First gave you human knowledge and divine,
Our prelates and our sages, sent from hence,
Made your sons converts both to God and sense.

The following very eloquent character of this great man, extracted from a recent publication, has been attributed to the classical pen of sir Wm.

Smith, one of the barons of his majesty's court of exchequer in Ireland. "On this gloom one luminary rose, and Ireland worshipped it with Persian idolatry. Her true patriot, her first, almost her last. Sagacious and intrepid, he saw, he dared. Above suspicion he was trusted; above envy he was beloved; above rivalry, he was obeyed. His wisdom was practical and prophetic; remedial for the present, warning for the future. He first taught Ireland that she might become a nation, and England that she might cease to be a despot. But he was a churchman; his gown impeded his course and entangled his efforts; guiding a senate, or heading an army, he had been more than Cromwell, and Ireland not less than England. As it was, he saved her by his courage, improved her by his authority, adorned her by his talents, and exalted her by his fame. His mission was but of ten years, and for ten years only did his personal power *mitigate* the government. But though no longer feared by the great, he was not forgotten by the wise. His influence, like his writings, has survived a century, and the foundations of whatever prosperity we have since erected, are laid in the disinterested and magnanimous patriotism of Swift."

10 *Thou, magic Spenser.*—Page 28.

The peasantry still show, in the south of Ireland, the little cottage in which Spenser wrote his *Fairy Queen*.

M.

Nor shouldst thou, Farquhar, absent be.—Page 28.

The last of Farquhar's plays, which he finished on his death-bed, is esteemed his best. It was written in six weeks, during a settled illness, and he died, as he had often foretold, before the run of the piece was over.

And sire and patriot in Quin appears!

Who, with a soul can nature's pang endure,

While Barry trembles in the tortured Moor,

And see, for ages shaded from our view,

Macklin gave life to the revengeful Jew?

Clive and Comedy came together.—Page 29.

The lovers of the drama record, with delight, the excellence of Quin's Cato, Barry's Othello, and Macklin's Shylock. This latter gentleman was the first who reformed the part, Shylock having always been played before this time as a comic character. He is also celebrated for his admirable comedies of *The Man of the World* and *Love a-la-Mode*.

Of Mrs. Clive Dr. Johnson said, that what she did best, she did better than Garrick.

12

Or the sweet swelling echo of Albany's lyre.—Page 30.

Albany is the ancient name of Scotland.

13 *Poor Dermody.*—Page 32.

Dermody, a second Chatterton, died of want, and disease, the consequence of it, in England. See Raymond's Life.

14 *A rude cairn at last!*—Page 33.

The cairns are heads or piles of loose stones, very common in Ireland. They are supposed to have been anciently the burial place of chieftains; and, indeed, to this day the custom of erecting a cairn on the scene of any remarkable death is common amongst the peasantry. To sir W. Colt Hoare's very splendid work on ancient Wiltshire, I must refer those who wish for much curious information on this subject. The most extraordinary production of this kind now in existence is that of Stonehenge, on Salisbury plain, on which Keating, our Irish Livy, makes the following remarks: "The indefatigable Stowe, in his British Chronicle, printed in London, in 1614, gives an account, that the Germans or Saxons were so pleased with the fertility and air of the island, that they barbarously murdered, at one massacre, four hundred and eighty of the nobility and gentry of Britain; and, that Aurelius Ambrosious, then king of Britain, caused the stones that were brought by Merlin from Mount Claire, in the province of Munster, to be erected in the same place where the barbarous execution was committed, as an eternal monument of German cruelty upon the natives of Britain." Some

time after, Aurelius himself was buried in the same place; and the same author observes, that these stones, when they were fixed, were called *chorea gigantum*, but now are known by the name of Stonehenge, on Salisbury plain. The historian farther remarks, that the Irish brought these stones with them from Africa; and what Geoffrey of Monmouth observes is very remarkable, that no two of those stones came originally out of the same part of the country. It is, indeed, remarkable, that Cambrensis himself, in some degree, confirms this curious record. He says, "Fuit antiquis temporibus in Hibernia, lapidum congeries admiranda quæ et *chorea gigantum* dicta fuit."

For these opinions I am too little of an antiquary to profess myself responsible. There are, however in the fields around me, many similar monuments to that of Stonehenge, though of less extent. The stones of many are immense, and raised to an height to the elevation of which human strength, without the aid of machinery would, in our day, be quite inadequate.

15 Perhaps e'en there on Fingal's arm.—Page 34.

Fin, or Fingal, was general of Cormac O'Conn, king of Ireland. He planted a colony in Scotland and, by incursions at the head of his fian or militia, protected it from the Romans. He is the same whom Mr. Macpherson calls "King of the Woody Morven;" and in order to claim whom for Scotland, he has recourse to the gross anachronism of

making him contemporary with Cucullin, who reigned two hundred years before! The following rhapsody descriptive of him has been ascribed to Ossian. "Finn, of the large and liberal soul of bounty; exceeding all his countrymen in the prowess and accomplishments of a warrior.—King of mild majesty and numerous bards.—The ever open house of kindness was his heart, the seat of undaunted courage. Great was the chief of the mighty Fenii. Finn of the perfect soul, the consummate wisdom, whose knowledge penetrated events and pierced through the veil of futurity. Finn, of the splendid and ever during glories. Bright were his blue rolling eyes, and his hair like flowing gold! Lovely were the charms of his unaltered beauty, and his cheeks like the glowing rose. Each female heart overflowed with affection for the hero, whose bosom was like the whiteness of the chalky cliff! Finn—the king of the glittering blades of war."

/b Or there *Æmania's palace rose*.—Page 34.

Æmania, the superb palace of the kings of Ulster.

/y Ollam inhaled a nation's woes.—Page 34.

Ollam Fodhla, the celebrated legislator of Ireland. He was the institutor of the Feis Teamrach or parliament of Tara. See Tara.

18 Or noble Oscar died.—Page 34.

Oscar, the son of Ossian, whose prowess has been immortalized by the poetry of his father.

19
Though Scotia unfilial the solace denies.—Page 35.

That Ossian was an Irishman I consider myself fully warranted in assuming, notwithstanding the effrontery of Macpherson's fabrication. It is not easy to conceive how any one can be duped into a belief of the authenticity of Macpherson's Ossian, after considering with what petulant obstinacy he uniformly refused the production of the manuscript. The rational inference is that he did not possess it, and if not, how absurd is the idea that he could have compiled a regular epic poem, handed down through so many hundred years by so frail and faithless a vehicle as oral tradition! As to the authenticity of some of the minor pieces there is no doubt; and the way in which they travelled to Scotland can be easily accounted for, by the circumstance of Finn's landing there, with his Irish troops; amongst whom it is natural to suppose that the battle and hunting songs of their great national contemporary bard were in high veneration. There are few old peasants in Ireland who cannot repeat many of those fragments, and who do not feel, even at this day, a superstitious reverence for the prowess of Finn-ma-Comhal and the poetry of Ossian. There is no trace, however, of any perfect epic poem to be found, nor can any

man of common sense expect it, after a lapse of so many centuries. That the Scotch have many of our customs and traditional songs is perfectly natural, as the colony will always retain some traces of the mother country. On this subject I refer the reader, not to any vague conjecture of modern days, but to the following conclusive authorities of ancient writers.

Cambrensis acknowledges that Niall the Irish monarch equipped a numerous fleet to invade Britain and Gaul; and by it expelled the old inhabitants from the north of Britain, and peopled it. "Gens," says he, "ab his propagia, specificato vocabulo Scotia vocatur in hodiernum."—*Topograph. Hibern. caput 16.*

Gildas, a monk, who wrote in 564, says, "Novissime venerunt Scoti a partibus Hispaniæ ad Hiberniam."

The venerable Bede—"Hibernia, propria Scotorum patria."

Capgravius—"Hibernia enim antiquitus Scotia dicta est, de quâ gens Scotorum."

Cesarius—"Ireland was properly known by the name of Scotia, out of which a colony of the Scots removed and settled themselves in the country possessed by the Picts in Britain."

Buchanan (a Scotchman)—"Scoti omnes Hiberniæ habitatores initio vocabantur ut indicat Orosius; nec semel Scotorum ex Hiberniâ transitum in Albaniam factum, nostri annales referunt."

James I., in his speech at Whitehall, declares "I have two reasons to be careful of the welfare of the Irish;—first, as king of England, by reason of the connexion of the countries; and next as king of Scotland; *for the ancient kings of Scotland are descended from the kings of Ireland.*" Lord Lyttleton, in his life of Henry II., allows "the having sent forth a colony which has risen to such a height of dominion and greatness, is a glory of which Ireland may justly boast." The reason why Ireland was anciently called Scotia was, because it took the name of Scotia, the wife of Milesius. Such are my authorities.

—Si quid novisti rectius istis

Candidus imperti—si non, his utere mecum.

20

Lo! by the sod where classic Barry sleeps.—Page 37.

Barry, the celebrated painter, whose beautiful pieces, to be seen at the Adelphi in London, justly placed him in the first rank of his profession. His painting of Elysium is a rich spectacle to the eye of genius, and fully justifies the opinion of Johnson, "that no man brought more mind to his profession." See Boswell's Life.

21

The shade of Carolan should come.—Page 38.

Carolan, the Orpheus of the Irish peasantry, was born in the county of Westmeath in the year 1670. Poverty, the usual fate of genius, attended him; but, with the usual fire of genius, he over-

came it. With no companion but his harp, and no patronage but his fancy, he found an easy access to the board of Irish hospitality, where his wants were a sufficient introduction, and his song an ample recompense. At an early age he had the misfortune to lose his sight by the small-pox; but such was his fortitude that he merely remarked "his eyes were transplanted into his ears." In one of his love songs, however, he touches on it in the following beautiful and pathetic allusion.

"E'en he whose eyes admit no ray
Of beauty's pure and splendid day,
Yet though he cannot see the light,
He feels it warm and knows it bright."

In his rambles he met with the celebrated Geminiani, the same who said he found no music on this side the Alps so original and affecting as the Irish—the foreigner, wishing to surpass, and perhaps surprise our peasant minstrel, played before him some of the most difficult Italian pieces; but what was his astonishment at hearing Carolan, when he had concluded, distinctly follow him through all their variations with a rapidity of execution and delicacy of touch peculiarly his own.

Armed with his harp, Carolan was invincible; and whether in mirth or in melancholy he swept its strings, Nature was his instructress and Sympathy his slave. The child of impulse, all his emotions were involuntary. When warmed into any sudden sensibility of feeling, his heart, if I may

so express it, was at his fingers' ends. It was in one of those moments of inspiration that he poured forth his beautiful pieces of sacred music and that delightful air called his Receipt, better known, perhaps, by the appellation of Bumper, Squire Jones.

It is a general remark that those who have been so unfortunate as to lose their sight are often compensated by the superior quickness of the other senses. Of this our minstrel was a striking instance, as the following anecdote, related by Mr. Walker, will testify. In his youth he was much enamoured of a peasant girl, called Bridget Cruise, who, however, was unpoetic enough to slight his advances, and they parted. After an interval of some years, Carolan went on a pilgrimage to an island in Lough Deargh, long venerable in the eye of rural superstition. On his return he found some devotees waiting the arrival of the boat, and taking the hand of a female in order to assist her on board, he instantly exclaimed, "By the hand of my gossip this is the hand of Bridget Cruise;" which indeed it proved to be. I had the relation from his own mouth, said Mr. O'Connor, and in terms which strongly impressed me with the emotion which he felt at thus accidentally meeting the object of his early affections. I have remarked that Carolan lived on the casual bounty of those he chose to visit. To the universal courtesy of his welcome there is but one exception, and his poetic revenge affords a specimen of ready and caus-

tic satire which ought not to be omitted. In one of his excursions he called at a house where he had always been received with the *ceudth milha foiltha*,—*an hundred thousand welcomes*—the proverbial expression of Irish hospitality: the master of the mansion was unfortunately absent, and a “pampered menial” called O’Flynn, drove poor Carolan away. He instantly sung, accompanied by his harp, the following lines—

“What a pity hell’s gates were not kept by
O’Flynn,

So surly a dog would let nobody in.”

Severe indeed must the inhospitable prohibition have appeared to him whose heart was an almshouse, and whose little all was public property. By the death of Carolan, Ireland lost the last of those harmonious wanderers who were the minstrels of her ancient happiness—the music of her summer day. His thoughts, his love, his soul, his very sigh, was Irish; and, in the melodious mourning of his national enthusiasm, when entertained at the residence of one of our fallen princes, he was heard to exclaim, “Here, and here only, in this house of O’Connor, my harp has the old sound in it.”

The following affecting anecdote will show the amiable estimation of his private life. A short time after his death, his bosom friend and brother minstrel, M’Cabe, who had not heard even of his illness, went to see him; in passing through the

church-yard near Carolan's cottage, he met a peasant of whom he inquired for his friend. The peasant pointed to his grave. M'Cabe tottered to the spot, and sinking down on it in agony, after some moments, thus vented his poetic lamentation.

"I came with Friendship's face to glad my heart,
But sad and sorrowful my steps depart;
In my friend's stead a spot of earth was shown,
And on his grave my wo-struck eyes were thrown;
No more to their distracted sight remained
But the cold clay that all they loved contained.
And there his last and narrow bed was made,
And the drear tombstone for its covering laid.
Alas! for this my aged heart is wrung,
Grief choaks my voice and trembles on my tongue;
Lonely and desolate I mourn the dead,
The friend with whom my every comfort fled.
There is no anguish can with this compare,
No pains, diseases, sufferings, nor despair,
Like that I feel, while such a loss I mourn;
My heart's companion from its fondness torn.
Oh! insupportable, distracting grief!
Wo that through life can never hope relief!
Sweet-singing harp, thy melody is o'er—
Sweet Friendship's voice—I hear thy sound no
more—
My bliss—my wealth of poetry is fled—
And every joy with him I loved is dead!
Alas! what wonder (while my heart drops blood
Upon the woes that drain its vital flood)

If maddening grief no longer can be borne,
And frenzy fills the breast with anguish torn!"

Those who are unacquainted with his music may find some of his most beautiful airs in the *Irish Melodies*, where, like gems set in gold, they appear "married" to the "immortal verse" of the inimitable Anacreon Moore.

Carolan died at the age of sixty-eight, and was buried in the parish church of Kilronan, in the diocese of Ardagh. A simple mount of grass forms his appropriate monument, and pure is the tear with which Nature's children consecrate his memory.

Mr. Walker, in his valuable treatise on the bards of Ireland, has given many of Carolan's songs and poems, out of which I have selected the two following sweet specimens, that the reader may form some idea of the genius of this self-taught minstrel. They have been translated from the original Irish by Miss Brooke.

SONG FOR MABLE LELLY.

By Carolan.

The youth whom favouring heaven's decree
To join his fate, my fair, with thee,
And see that lovely head of thine,
With fondness on his arm recline:

No thought but joy can fill his mind,
Nor any care can entrance find;

Nor sickness hurt, nor terror shake;
And death will spare him for thy sake.

For the bright flowing of thy hair,
That decks a face so heavenly fair,
And a fair form to match that face,
The rival of the sygnet's grace:

When with calm dignity she moves,
Where the clear stream her hue improves,
Where she her snowy bosom laves,
And floats majestic on the waves.

Grace gave thy form, in beauty gay,
And ranged thy teeth in bright array,
All tongues with joy thy praises tell,
And Love delights with thee to dwell!

To thee harmonious powers belong,
That add to verse the charms of song,
Soft melody to numbers join,
And make the poet half divine.

As when the softly blushing rose,
Close by some neighbouring lily glows,
Such is the glow thy cheeks diffuse,
And such their bright and blended hues.

The timid lustre of thine eye,
With nature's purest tints can vie,
With the sweet blue-bell's azure gem,
That drops upon its modest stem.

The poets of Ierne's plains,
To thee devote their choicest strains;
And oft their harps for thee are strung,
And oft thy matchless charms are sung.

Thy voice, that binds the listening soul,
That can the wildest rage control,
Bid the fierce crane its powers obey,
And charm him from his finny prey:

Nor doubt I oft its wondrous art,
Nor hear, with unimpassioned heart;
Thy health, thy beauties ever dear,
Oft crown my glass with sweetest cheer.

Since the famed fair of ancient days,
Whom bards and worlds conspired to praise,
Not one like thee has since appeared,
Like thee to every heart endeared.

How blest the bard, oh lovely maid!
To find thee in thy charms arrayed;
'Thy pearly teeth, thy flowing hair,
'Thy neck beyond the cygnet fair.

As when the simple birds at night,
Fly round the torch's fatal light,
Wild and with ecstasy elate,
Unconscious of approaching fate;

So the soft splendours of thy face,
And thy fair form's enchanting grace,

Allure to death unwary love,
And thousands the bright ruin prove.

Even he whose hapless eyes no ray
Admit from beauty's splendid day,
Yet, though he cannot see the light,
He feels it warm and knows it bright.

In beauty, talents, taste refined,
And all the graces of the mind,
In all unmatched thy charms remain,
Nor meet a rival on the plain.

Thy slender foot, thine azure eye,
Thy smiling lip of scarlet die,
Thy tapering hand, so soft and fair,
The bright redundance of thy hair!

Oh blest be the auspicious day,
That gave them to thy poet's lay,
O'er rival bards to lift his name,
Inspire his verse and swell his fame.

The following is his monody on the death of his wife.

Were mine the choice of intellectual fame,
Of spellful song and eloquence divine,
Painting's sweet power, philosophy's pure flame,
And Homer's lyre and Ossian's harp were mine,
The splendid arts of Erin, Greece; and Rome,
In Mary lost, would lose their wonted grace.
All would I give to snatch her from the tomb,
Again to fold her in my fond embrace!

Desponding, sick, exhausted with my grief,
Awhile the founts of sorrow ceased to flow—
In vain—I rest not—sleep brings no relief—
Cheerless, companionless, I wake to wo!
Nor birth, nor beauty shall again allure,
Nor fortune win me to another bride;
Alone I'll wander, and alone endure,
'Till death restore me to my dear one's side.

Once every thought and every scene was gay,
Friends, mirth, and music all my hours employed—
Now doomed to mourn my last sad years away,
My life a solitude—my heart a void.
Alas the change! to change again no more:
For every comfort is with Mary fled,
And ceaseless anguish shall her loss deplore,
'Till age and sorrow join me with the dead!

Adieu each gift of nature and of art,
'That erst adorned me in life's early prime,
The cloudless temper and the social heart,
The soul ethereal and the song sublime!
Thy loss, my Mary, chased them from my breast;
Thy sweetness cheers, thy judgment aids no
more;
The muse deserts an heart with grief opprest,
And lost is every joy that charmed before.

22 *In Erin's elder day.*—Page 40.

Perhaps the annals of the world cannot furnish a more striking instance of the savage effects of persecution on the human mind than Ireland. It will indeed be difficult to persuade those contemplating what she is, of the high station which she held at former periods; but unless the positive testimony of even hostile historians be rejected, with an hardihood at which scepticism would blush, she must appear "the luminary of the western world whence savage septs and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion." "Many Saxons," says lord Lyttleton, "resorted thither for instruction, and brought from thence the use of letters to their ignorant countrymen. We learn from Bede, an Anglo-Saxon himself, that about the middle of the seventh century, numbers, both of the nobles and of the second rank of Englishmen, retired out of England into Ireland, for the sake of studying theology and leading there a stricter life. And all these the Irish, whom Bede calls Scots, most willingly received and maintained at their own charge, supplying them also with books, and being their teachers without fee or reward! a most honourable testimony, not only to the learning, but also to the bounty and hospitality of that nation. Great praise is also due to the piety of the Irish ecclesiastics, who, as we know from the clear and unquestionable testimony of many foreign writers, made themselves the apostles of barbarous heathen nations, without

any apparent inducement to such laborious undertaking, except the merit of the work. By the preaching of these men the Northumbrians, the East-Angles, and the northern Picts were converted. Convents also were founded by them in Burgundy, Flanders, Germany, Italy, and other foreign countries, where they were distinguished by the rigid integrity and purity of their manners. So that Ireland, from the opinion conceived of their piety, was styled, *the Island of Saints.*"

To this generous tribute of lord Lyttleton may be added the equally unprejudiced authority of another English writer of our own day. "In Ireland," says Mr. Plowden, "did our great Alfred receive his education." Bede informs us that the Anglo-Saxon king Oswald applied to Ireland for learned men to teach his people the principles of Christianity; and a foreign writer (Henrick of St. Germain) under the French monarch Charles the Bald, says, "why should I mention Ireland? almost the whole nation, despising the dangers of the sea, resort thither with a numerous train of philosophers." Camden also acknowledges that "Ireland abounded with men of genius; when literature was rejected every where else;" and it is frequently related by our writers, in praise of a person's education,

"Exemplo patrum, commotus amore legendi,
Ivit ad Hybernos, Sophia mirabili claros"

Spenser confesses that Ireland had the use of letters long before England, and the younger Scali-

ger, clarum et venerabile nomen, says, “ du temps de Charlemagne et 200 ans après, omnes fere docti étoient d'Iriande.” The historian of Charlemagne, Sangalus the monk, asserts that the colleges of Paris and Pavia were founded by Irish monks; and, according to Polidore Virgil, king Alfred sent Johannes Scotus Erigena, his own tutor, from Ireland, to be the first public professor and teacher at Oxford. Ireland itself was formerly studded with seats of learning, and the college of Armagh alone contained, as we are told, at one time, seven thousand students! However these bulwarks of our ancient learning may be sought to be undermined by the political vermin of our day, we may be solaced by remarking that they were held in sufficient estimation by that pure and practical philosopher who, by the piety of his life, has given a currency to virtue, and by the splendour of his intellect, shed a glory on his country. “ I have often wished,” says Dr. Johnson, “ that Irish literature were cultivated. Ireland is known to have been once the seat of piety and learning, and surely it would be very acceptable to all those who are curious, either in the origin of nations or the affinity of languages, to be further informed of the revolutions of a people so ancient and once so illustrious.” Without, however, having recourse to the venerable authorities of the dead, perhaps there may be found, even in our day, some faint and shadowy traces of our former learning. When our cities and our seminaries re-echoed with the dismal war-whoop of persecution affrighted literature fled for refuge to the rocks and

recesses of the country, where, mid the sanctuary of solitude, and secrecy of caverns, she nursed her offspring in the hope, and solaced them with the history of better times. Even there still the spirit of her elder day is not forgotten. "Amid the mountains of Kerry," says Mr. Smith in his history, "it is well known that classical learning extends, even to a fault, among the poorer classes"—and O'Halloran observes, "that it is worthy of remark, this propensity is most prevalent where the people have least communication with the adjacent plains, and speak pure Irish! Let us hope that the day is not far distant when this spark, which still lingers, shall be suffered to extend itself, and perhaps, should barbarism again overcloud our hemisphere, Ireland may shine in future times as formerly, "a light to the nations."

23 The ruins frown in proud disdain.—Page 41.

Some of the ruined castles and abbeys in Ireland appear to have been of the noblest order of architecture, and to mark an æra in the annals of that ill-fated country, in which the arts must have flourished in the highest degree of cultivation; but now, alas!

—Hic, inter flumina nota

Et fontes sacros, frigus captabis opacum.

VIRGIL, *Ecloga* 1.

24 *And the spears of the brave.*—Page 44.

The organization of the volunteers in Ireland forms an epoch which no Irishman should forget, because it shows him of what his country, when united, is capable. The story of that period is simply this. It had ever been the plan of England to garrison Ireland, in time of peace, with a standing army double the amount of her own, taking into consideration their comparative population and extent. The fatal policy of the American war, however, rendered it necessary to draft away a large portion of this establishment, so that in 1778 the number was reduced to 5000; and this diminished force was daily threatened with an hostile invasion. The eye of Europe was turned upon our country, and she soon exhibited an object worthy its attention. Suddenly the united population rose in arms, and mankind saw, with astonishment, an infant military nation ranged, under the banner of the law, beaming death and defiance on their enemies! The effect was electric—our continental enemies knew too well the invincible valour of the Irish to execute their menaces, and thus, in the hour of need, this *disloyal people* saved England from the effects of her folly, though it seems they could not shame her out of the injustice of her suspicions.

Having thus rescued the island from foreign incursion, the attention of the volunteers was turned to a fertile source of contemplation, its internal grievances. They demanded a free trade and an unfettered parliament—so novel and bold a propo-

sition was naturally, at first, received with some hesitation, but the irresistible eloquence of our native Demosthenes, wielding our former glory against our present apathy, raised the national pride, and, as we then thought (*eheu fugaces*) laid the foundations of the national prosperity. "There was a time," said Mr. Grattan, "when the vault of liberty could hardly contain the flight of your pinion—some of you went forth like a giant, rejoicing in his strength, but now you stand like elves at the door of your own pandemonium. The armed youth of the country, like a thousand streams, thundered from a thousand hills, and filled the plain with the congregated waters, in whose mirror was seen, for a moment, the watery image of the British constitution!—the waters subside—the torrents cease—the rill ripples within its own bed, and the boys and children of the village paddle in the brook."

25

Her banner of green and her helm of gold.—Page 44.

This country formerly abounded with the precious metals, and with gold in particular. Scarcely a year passes without discovering some gorget, shield, or helmet, wrought in the purest gold, and of the choicest workmanship. Such relics are generally found in the bogs, amongst which that of Cullen in the county of Tipperary has acquired the name of "Golden" from the number it contained. In Vol. VII. of the *Archæologia* there is a letter from the late countess of Moira, a name embalmed

in the heart of her country, describing a curiosity found in this bog.

“In the year 1692,” says the illustrious writer, “some workmen, cutting turf for firing, in a bog in Tipperary, found a cap or crown of gold weighing five ounces, supposed to have belonged to one of the provincial kings in the reign of Brian Borhoime.” To this crown Harris also alludes, giving it however a date of much higher antiquity. He supposes it to have been made before the Christian æra, because it has not the cross, “which,” says he, “no crown belonging to a Christian prince since that period ever was without.” It is at present preserved at Auglune in Champagne, the residence of the Cumerford family. Mr. O’Halloran speaks of another crown weighing six ounces, found in the same bog, which, upon a test, was affirmed by a jeweller to have the least alloy of any gold he ever met. So abundantly indeed was this metal derived from native mines, that we find, long after the Norman invasion, an act of the little parliament of the Pale, prohibiting the use of gold in *horse furniture*, except to persons of a certain rank.

Lord Strafford, during his administration, sent to Charles I. the bit of a bridle made of solid gold, weighing ten ounces, found in a bog, and an ingot of silver, of 300 ounces, from the royal mines. These mines, he tells the secretary of state in one of his letters, were so rich, that every fodder of lead yielded 30lb. of fine silver. There are at pre-

sent some gold mines in the county of Wicklow, which, however, are not worked. The art of mining seems to have been very anciently known in Ireland, as those who obstinately persist in denying Ireland any knowledge whatever beyond that of savages, may see by the following extract from Mr. Hamilton's very able work on Antrim.

“About twelve years ago,” says he, speaking of a coal-mine in Kilkenny, “the workmen, in pushing forward a new adit toward the coal, unexpectedly broke through the rock into a cavern. The hole which they opened was not very large, and two young boys were made to creep in, with candles to explore this new region. They accordingly went forward, and entered an extensive labyrinth, branching off into numerous apartments, in the mazes and windings of which they were at last completely lost. After various vain attempts to return, their lights were extinguished, and they sat down together in utter despair of an escape from this dreary dungeon. In the mean time the people without were alarmed for their safety, fresh hands were employed, a passage was at last made for the workmen, and the two unfortunate adventurers extricated, after a whole night's imprisonment. On examining this subterranean wonder it was found to be a complete gallery, which had been driven forward many hundred yards to the bed of coal; that it branched off into various chambers where the miners had pushed on their different works; that pillars were left at different intervals to sup-

port the roof—in short it was found to be an extensive mine, wrought by a set of people at least as expert in the business as the present generation. Some remains of the tools, and even the baskets used in the works, were discovered, but in such a state that, on being touched, they immediately fell to powder. The antiquity of this work is pretty evident from this, that there does not remain the most remote tradition of it in the country. But it is still more strongly demonstrable from a natural process which has taken place since its formation; for stalactite pillars had been generated, reaching from the roof of the pit to the floor, and the sides and supports were found covered with sparry incrustations, which the present workmen do not observe to be deposited in any definite space of time.”

26

Leinster! If birth alone had made thee great.—

Page 46.

The only duke in Ireland, the descendant of a noble line of ancestry, and the source, in himself, of that purest of all titles, a genuine nobility of heart; the name of James duke of Leinster, can never be forgotten by the Irish people while gratitude lingers amongst them. He was unanimously chosen commander of the volunteers of the metropolis at that trying æra. “A man,” says the venerable Grattan, “whose accomplishments give a grace to our cause, and whose patriotism gave a credit to our nobles; whom the rabble itself could

not see without veneration; as if they beheld not only something good but sacred—a man who, drooping and faint when we began our struggles, forgot his infirmity and found, in the recovery of our constitution, a vital principle added to his own.” Such is the panegyric with which eloquence has adorned him—but beauteous as it is, he is embellished with one more lovely—the lamentation of the rich, the blessings of the poor, the sincere, silent, heart-rending sorrow of the country.

————— *thy holy name*

Still from our hills a beacon light shall flame.—P. 47.

The duke of Leinster has left a son whom Fame has adorned with all his father’s patriotism and virtue. If so, there is yet an hope for Ireland. The people want, and have long wanted, some patriotic resident nobleman, through whom their grievances may be honestly stated, and redress demanded. If indeed the young duke be like his father, who is in heaven, viewing his ancestry but as so many warnings not to sully their name, holding his wealth but for the relief of the poor, and his talents for the good of the nation, there is yet an hope for Ireland. Happy shall it be for his country, happier for himself.

“Ille Deum vitam accipiet, divisque videbit
Permixtos heroas, et ipse videbitur illis.”

27
On the sweet tone of Flood's harmonious tongue.—

Page 48.

Henry Flood, an orator, a patriot, and a statesman, long graced, by his eloquence, the Irish house of commons. "He made," said Mr. Hardy, in his able *Life of the virtuous lord Charlemont*, "a conspicuous figure in the annals of his country, and he is entitled to the thanks of every public spirited man in it, for unquestionably he was the senator who, by his repeated discussion of questions seldom, if ever, approached before, first taught Ireland that she had a parliament.

Mr. Flood's life had been devoted to the welfare of his country, and his dying act corresponded with the sentiment. He had long seen with sorrow, the neglect of our native language and the dispersion of our ancient manuscripts over the libraries of the continent and the Vatican, and, in his will, left, according to the calculation of lord Rosse, five thousand pounds per annum for the revival of the one and the recovery of the other, to Trinity College, Dublin. This noble bequest was, however, afterwards frustrated by a decision in a court of law. He was a general of the volunteers: and the circumstance reminds me of an anecdote full of the simplicity which so often accompanies genius.

Having come to my native town, Sligo, in his military capacity, the boys of the rev. Mr. Armstrong's school appeared before him, in martial uniform at a review—for at that time the spirit of arms alike animated the crutch and the nursery.

Flood immediately addressed the schoolboy regiment in the following terms—"It is related to the honour of a Spartan chief, that he was fond of superintending the sports of children: your sports are superior to those of the Spartan boys—But shall I call them sports? No, they are exertions which make youths men, and without which men are but children! Milton, in his Treatise on Education has set apart precepts for military exercises, which your worthy teacher has brought into example, and I behold your early but auspicious exertions with the same pleasure the husbandman contemplates the pleasing promise of a benignant harvest. Go on—and supply the succession of those fruitful labourers for the public good whom time may take away." Such was the impression of this beautiful address upon the youthful mind, that I had it verbatim from my father, who happened to be a member of the corps, after a recollection of thirty years.

28 *Where silver Burgh poured on the nation's ear.—*
Page 48.

Of the celebrated Hussey Burgh, long the ornament of the Irish house of commons, I have extracted the following character from the pen of Mr. Hardy, who was long acquainted with him, so that the fidelity of the picture may be relied upon.

"Walter Hussey, who afterwards took the name of Burgh, and was advanced to the station of lord chief baron of the exchequer, came into parliament

under the auspices of James duke of Leinster. His speeches, when he first entered the house of commons, were very brilliant, very figurative, and far more remarkable for that elegant poetic taste, which had highly distinguished him when a member of the university, than any logical illustration or depth of argument. But, as he was blessed with great endowments, every session took away somewhat from the unnecessary splendour and redundancy of his harangues. To make use of a phrase of Cicero, in speaking of his own improvement in eloquence, his orations were gradually deprived of all fever. Clearness of intellect, a subtle, refined, and polished wit, a gay, fertile, uncommonly fine imagination, very classical taste, superior harmony and elegance of diction peculiarly characterized this justly celebrated man. To those who never heard him, as the fashion of this world in eloquence as in all things else, soon passes away, it may be no easy matter to convey a just idea of his style of speaking. It differed totally from the models which have been presented to us by some of the great masters of rhetoric in latter days. His eloquence was by no means gaudy, tumid, or approaching to that species of rhetoric which the Roman critics denominated *Asiatic*, but it was always decorated as the occasion required; it was often compressed and pointed, though that could not be said to have been its general feature. It was sustained by great ingenuity, great rapidity of intellect, luminous and piercing satire. The classi-

cal allusions of this orator, for he was truly one, were so appropriate, they followed each other in such bright and varied succession, and at times spread such an unexpected and triumphant blaze around his subject, that all persons who were in the least tinged with literature, could never be tired of listening to him. The Irish are a people of quick sensibility, and perfectly alive to every display of ingenuity or illustrative wit. Never did the spirit of the nation soar higher than during the splendid days of the volunteer institution; and when Hussey Burgh, alluding to some coercive laws, and to that association then in its proudest array, said, in the house of commons, "that such laws were sown like dragons' teeth and sprung up armed men;" the applause which followed, and the glow of enthusiasm which he kindled in every mind far exceed my powers of description. "He did not," said Mr. Flood, "live to be ennobled, but he was ennobled by nature."—I value the just prerogatives of ancient nobility, but to the tears and regrets of a nation bending over the urn of public and private excellence, as Ireland did over his, what has heraldry to add, or at such moments what can it bestow!"

29

Now heartless traders heap their sordid hoard.—P. 48.

This is well delineated both by the pen and the pencil, in the elegant poem entitled "Petticoat Loose, a Fragmentary Tale of the Castle." The Irish house of commons is now the mart of the

money changers! a most characteristic transition. Of the Irish union—that infamous consummation of our calamities—begot in bribery and baptised in blood—which robbed the Irishman of the impulse of a name—degraded his country into a province—gave him an itinerant legislature and an absentee aristocracy—left him at the mercy of every prentice statesman, and carried away his wealth to bribe his foreign masters into contemptuous civility—I shall not speak, because I trust it is but a fleeting speck, and that Irishmen will never desist until the very memory of that penal statute on our national pride is obliterated and erased.

30 *To where Kinkora's palace shed
Its splendours*—————Page 51.

Kinkora, the palace of Brian.

30 *Or Clonmacnoise upreared its head.*—Page 51.

The celebrated abbey of Clonmacnoise, long the retreat of piety and learning, was destroyed, in 1584, by the garrison of Athlone, who barbarously plundered it of every ornament and devastated the sacred shrine of the great St. Kieran. The English seem to have enjoyed a peculiar pleasure in the annihilation of our religious edifices, and every antiquity which they possessed. Thus we find lord Grey, a sacrilegious incendiary in the reign of Henry VIII., destroying the venerable cathedral of Down, which the following verse described as pos-

sessing the remains of three renowned ecclesiastics,—

“Hi tres in Duno tumulo, tumulantuo in uno,
BRIGIDA, PATRICIUS, atque COLUMBA pius.”

It was in these holy sanctuaries, that what remained of art or antiquity, after the ravages of the Danes, were preserved. They abounded in fine paintings and beauteous relics. Cambrensis makes mention of a concordance of the four Gospels, found in the church of Kildare, so divinely painted that he declares, “neither the pencil of an Appelles, nor the chisel of a Lysippus ever formed the like; in a word it seems to have been executed by something more than a mortal hand.” It was carefully destroyed!!! Let no man hereafter profane the ancient name of Ireland, because her monuments have perished! But, though the transient brass and mouldering column bear not down to future ages the records of our old magnificence, there is a living and far nobler herald to confirm its existence to the traveller; the native grandeur of soul; the cherished spirit of ancient hospitality; the pure inherent, unpurchasable nobility of heart, still glow throughout the island, the embers of its ruined greatness—the traditional relics of its hereditary pride and defrauded inheritance.

37 *Proud Tara's temple stood.*—Page 51.

Tara, the grand seat of Ireland's triennial parliament, was originally founded by the great Irish le-

gislator Ollam, as an old poem preserved by Keating tells us.

“ The learned Ollam Fodhla first ordained
The great assembly where the nobles met,
And priests and poets and philosophers,
To make new laws and to amend the old,
And to advance the honour of their country.”

At this assembly all the kings, priests, poets, and philosophers of the kingdom attended, and our old histories dwell with peculiar delight on the details of its magnificence.

The room where the parliament sat was 300 feet in length, 40 cubits in height, and had fourteen doors. They met three days before the 1st of November, and, having spent the two first in friendly intercourse, on the third the grand feast of Samhuin, or the moon, commenced. This was a custom derived from Phenicia. The feast opened with sacred odes set to a grand variety of national instruments, and after the druids had finished their rites, the fire of Samhuin was lighted, and the deities solemnly invoked to consecrate the national councils. The order of business was first the police—then the foreign alliance—next peace and war—and though last not least in importance, the formal registry of the records in the Psalter of Tara. The merchants and artizans had also their meeting in order to deliver into the grand assembly the state of trade and manufactures.

During the festivals the provincial queens gave grand assemblies to the ladies of the nobility, and

so chivalrous were our ancient institutions, with respect to the fair sex, that the slightest insult offered to one of them was death without appeal or power of pardon. The attention to heraldry was surprising for such a distant age. The first notice of the assembly was a sound of trumpet, then the esquires of the nobility presented themselves at the door of the grand hall, and gave in the shields and ensigns of their masters to the deputy grand marshal, which were ranged under the direction of the king-at arms—at sound of the second trumpet the target-bearers of the general officers gave in their insignia, and at the third sound, the kings, princes, nobility, and all other constituent parts of this great assembly, took their seats with the utmost regularity under their respective banner. Such is the account of our oldest writers.

32

The holy seers, the minstrel band.—Page 52.

With a true minstrel pride the poet of Ireland dwells on the high respect paid to the bards of old. They had privileges denied to any other order in the state. Their persons were sacred, their property secure, the hall of hospitality was ever open to them, and the name of bard was a passport even among enemies. These privileges were amply repaid by the children of song—they raised the spirit of the nation—in war inspired the hero—in peace civilized the passions—they were the soul of the festival, and the herald of the legislator—like the fiery pillar which preceded Moses in the wilder-

ness, he was guided by the "light of the song," and Ireland became, as it were, harmonized into order! Mr. Smith, in his fall of Zura, gives a beautiful instance of the superstitious respect in which they were held. "The bard, with his harp, goes trembling to the door—his steps are like the warrior of many years, when he bears mournful to the tomb the son of his son—the threshold is slippery with Crigal's wandering blood—across it the aged falls—the spear of Duarna is lifted over him—but the *dying* Crigal tells—*it is the bard!*"

The bard always attended his patron to battle, and remained on the edge of the field, gleaning from his exploits the subjects of his future panegyric—if, however, he perceived him likely to be overpowered, he rushed forward, arrayed in his flowing robes of white, and, to the music of his glittering harp, sung the "eye of the battle."

"He is entranced—the fillet burst that bound
His liberal locks—his snowy vestments fall
In ample folds, and all his floating form
Doth seem to glisten with divinity."—MASON.

This war-song, called the "eye of the battle," was generally an enumeration of the patron's virtues, and abounds chiefly in epithets, as may be seen by the following specimen addressed, in the hour of danger, by the celebrated Fergus, Finn's poet, to Gaul Mac Morni. Gaul, vigorous and warlike—chief of the intrepid—unboundedly generous—the delight of majesty—a wall of unextinguishable fire—rage unremitting—champion re-

plete with battles—guide to the rage of heroes—son of the great Morna—generous to poets—respite to warriors—tribute on nations—downfall of foreigners.”

Even into the midst of hostile tribes, the minstrels used to rush to animate their patrons, and strange as it may appear, such was the reverence in which they were held, even by enemies, we have but one instance, in our whole history, of violence being offered to their person; and the monarch who thus transgressed has descended to us with the opprobrious epithet of Kin-salach, or the “*accursed*.” The transaction is related with much minuteness in the “book of Sligo.” This extreme encouragement naturally excited emulation in the composition of our music, and to it we owe our confessed superiority in this delightful science. I have often thought our ancient perfection in this respect, no trifling proof of our national antiquity. Of every barbarous nation of which we read, their few instruments were uncouth, and their strains unmelodious; but even so far back as the English invasion, we find ours preferred to that of every country in the world, even by our avowed vilifier, Cambrensis himself, who strains all the power of antithesis in giving its eulogium “*tam suavi v̄elocitate, tam dispari paritate, tam discordi concordia, consona redditur et completur melodia.*” The learned Selden, in his notes on Drayton, confesses that the Welch music, for the most part, came out of Ireland, with Gruffydth ap Conon, prince of North Wales, about

king Stephen's time; and the illustrious Bacon declares in his *Sylva*, that "no harp has the sound so melting and so prolonged as the Irish harp." Such was its fame, indeed, on the continent, that we are told by various historians, when the abbey of Niville, in France, was founded, the wife of Pepin sent to Ireland for musicians and choristers for the church music.

The melancholy airs are uncommonly pathetic, so much so, that I have heard of a celebrated Italian, who, after listening to some of them, suddenly exclaimed, "that must be the music of a people who have lost their freedom!" One of our wandering harpers, in allusion to this pathos, placed this inscription lately on his harp—

"Cur lyra funestas edit percussa sonores!
Sicut amissum fors diadema gemit."

33 And violate our paradise—Page 55.

"Sure," says Spenser, "it is a most beautiful and sweet country as any under heaven, being stored with many goodly rivers, replenished with all sorts of fish, most abundantly sprinkled with many sweet islands and goodly lakes, like little inland-seas, that will carry even ships upon their waters; adorned with goodly woods, even fit for building of houses and ships, so commodiously, that if some princes of the world had them, they would soon hope to be lords of all seas, and, ere long, of the world." Such is the description of the country.

As a companion to it I transcribe another, of its inhabitants, by the learned Camden, a writer so little partial to us, that he has been thus quaintly characterized.

“*Perlustras Anglos, oculos, Camdene, duobis,
Uno oculo, Scotos, cæcus, Hybernigenas.*”

He says, “*In universum, gens hæc corpore valida et imprimis agilis, animo forti et elato, ingenio acri, bellicosa, vitæ prodiga, laboris, frigoris et inediæ patiens, veneri indulgens, hospitibus perbenigna, amore constans, inimicitiiis implacabilis, credulitate levis, gloriæ avida, contumeliæ et injuriæ impatiens, et in omnes actus vehementissima.*” Those who know the Irish character will easily see the fidelity of the picture. In Spenser’s description he has omitted, however, a blessing almost peculiar to Ireland—its freedom from venomous animals. The natives ascribe this, to a miracle wrought by their tutelar saint, St. Patrick, as the natives of Malta ascribe the same happy exemption to the influence of St. Paul. Ireland has enjoyed the blessing certainly for a long series of years; as, in the beginning of the eighth century, we find the venerable Bede saying, “*Nullus ibi serpens vivere valeat;*” and after him Camden, “*Nullus hic serpens nec venenatum quicquam.*” There is ascribed, even to the native oak, the surprising property of destroying spiders; of which the beautiful roof of Westminster Hall is an example. The oak of this roof was sent to Rufus, at his own request,

by Turlough, king of Ireland, in the year 1097. What a pity it is we do not follow the kindly example of nature, and banish also from our island, the religious and political poison which infects it!

34

Erin has sent her warriors bright

To win the laurels of the fight.—Page 56.

This is no idle boast. It is a truth, written in blood on every shore in Europe. We need not refer to Spenser for his testimony, that “there is no man who cometh on more boldly to the charge than an Irishman;” while Blenheim, Ramilies, Cremona, Dettingen, Fontenoy, and innumerable similar monuments to our national bravery exist—a bravery so indisputable, that it even extorted from king William, at the siege of Limerick, the unwilling declaration that, “with the handful of brave Irishmen inclosed in the city, he would take it in despite of his whole English army!” The abbé Geoghagan, quoting the Camp de Vendome, says, “Monsieur de Vendome, qui avoit une estime particuliere pour cette belliqueuse nation, à la tête de laquelle il avoit livré tant de combats, et remporté tant de victoires, avoua qu’il étoit surpris des terribles expéditions que ces bouchers de l’armée (c’est ainsi qu’il les appelloit) faisoient en sa présence.” All France, says he, applauded, and the greatest and most powerful monarch crowned the

eulogies of this brave and gallant nation, by styling them "*Les braves Irlandois!*"

35 *He, who on Barossa's height.*—Page 56.

It was serjeant Masterson, a native of Roscommon in Ireland, who took the famous imperial eagle at the battle of Barossa; this ensign was encircled with a golden wreath, as a particular mark of the emperor's favour. The prince regent, ever anxious to reward merit, has since promoted its brave captor.

36 *Not Dettingen's undying name.*—Page 57.

Lord Ligonier's regiment of cavalry, to a man Irish, saved the king's person, and gained the battle of Dettingen.

37 *Not Fontenoy's eternal fame.*—Page 57.

Such was the bravery of our catholic countrymen, at the battle of Fontenoy, that George II. exclaimed in an agony, "Cursed be the laws which deprive me of such subjects!" What a comment on that nefarious penal code, which Mr. Burke, so justly describes to be "a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance, and as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment, and degradation of a

people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man!"

38 *Not e'en Cremona's classic flame.*—Page 57.

At Cremona, the regiments of Dillon and Burke saved the whole French army. Such was their havoc, that it was said, in the English house of commons, the Irish had done more mischief to the allies abroad, than they could have done at home by the possession of their forfeited estates.

39
Guards of their prince, and glories of their land.
Page 59.

The brave 87th, commanded by sir John Doyle, and entirely composed of Irishmen, so distinguished themselves in the present campaign, that the prince regent styled them "*His own Irish*," an epithet, full of affection in him who gave it, and of glory to those who received it.—Let the illustrious benefactor but *extend* his justice, and, in the hour of need (which God avert) he will have an island for his throne, and its united people for his body-guard.

It is worthy of remark, that there is scarcely a single name of any note at present on the peninsula

which is not Irish.—Wellington, Pack, Blake, Carroll, O'Donnel, Trant, Beresford, and countless others, form a bright and dazzling constellation in the night of Ireland's sorrow! Unhappy countrymen! In America you lead the bar—in Spain you guide the army—in England you adorn the senate—at home you are—*disqualified!*

40 *Whate'er may be his humble lot.*—Page 60.

“Dives, inops, Romæ, seu, si fors ita jusserit,
exul.”

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